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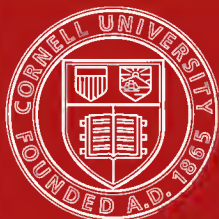
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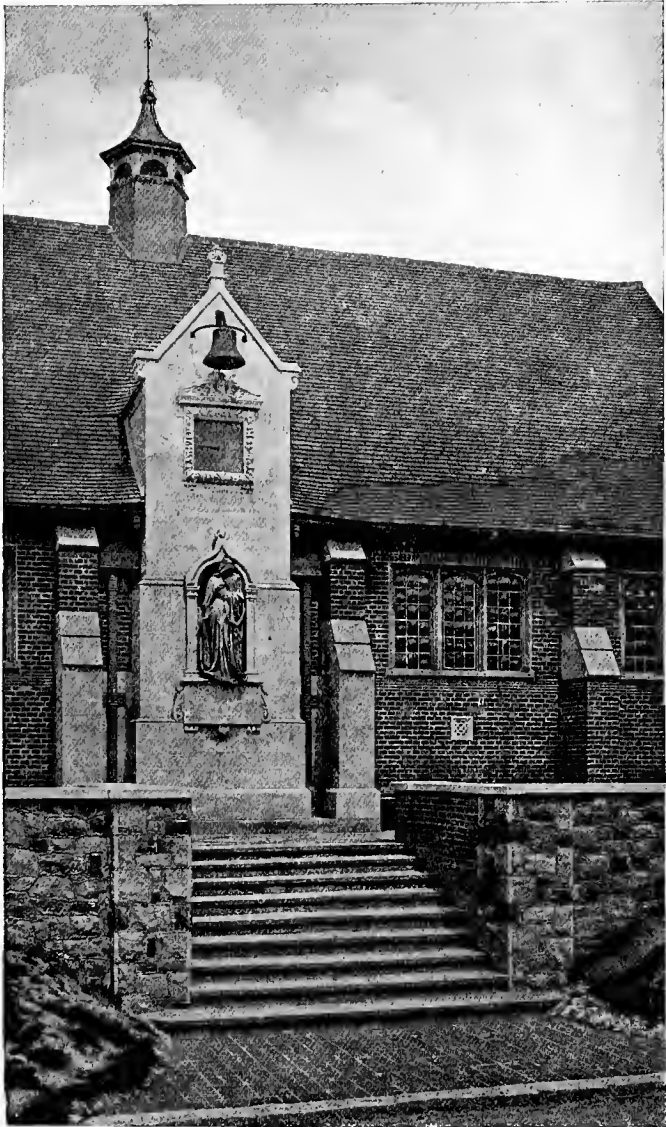


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VILLAGE CLUBS AND HALLS



KEMSING VILLAGE HALL: THE TERRACE.

VILLAGE CLUBS AND HALLS

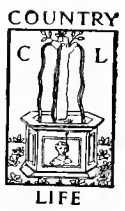
BY
LAWRENCE WEAVER

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P R E F A C E

No apology seems needful for a book which illustrates and describes a number of village halls and clubs of diverse character in their size, cost, equipment, and architectural treatment. Village life has to be renewed and the provision of a common meeting ground is one of the ways to do it. The movement to fill this need is strong and increasing. It takes some of its vigour from the desire to set up worthy memorials to those who gave up their lives that the sanctity of their villages, no less than the safety of the nation, might be kept whole and undefiled. In the hope that the text, as well as the much more important pictures, may be of practical use to those who are contemplating the foundation of a village club, I have in most cases given the pre-war cost of the buildings illustrated, but it may be well to repeat an oft-said warning.

In August 1919 I wrote in the preface to a second edition of my book on cottages:¹ "None can prophesy what will be the ultimate level of building costs when the grave shortage and consequent high cost of certain materials have given place to normal supply. But without prophesying I would counsel those intending to build not to assume that prices will be less than double pre-war figures, for some time to come. Even that is very optimistic." Writing this as I do in January 1920, I find my August opinion still more optimistic, and in the light of present information the ratio of pre-war costs to present-day costs is at least one to three, and may yet be more.

I make no recommendations as to the use of this, that, or

¹ *The Country Life Book of Cottages.*

the other material or method of construction, save the general and common-sense suggestion that local materials are always and for all reasons the best. It may be that in some districts wall building of pisé de terre, such as is described in the recent book¹ by my friend Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis, will be far cheaper than brick or stone. The use of such local materials saves money and transport. It does more, for it is simple enough to be done by villagers untrained in building crafts, but eager to give a hand in providing a centre for their own pleasure and profit.

I hope no one will suppose that, with this book in his hand, he can set out to design and build a village club, for I had no such intention in writing it. I know no way of getting good architecture except by securing the services of a good architect: the amateur architect is too expensive a luxury for these days of difficulty in building. Moreover, the promoters of village clubs have some responsibility. The amenities of too many of our villages have been destroyed already by tin tabernacles and ignorant gaucheries in every other material. The home of a village club must be not only apt for its purpose, but beautiful if possible, and if too humble for positive beauty, at least seemly.

We may have sworn, with Blake, not to cease from mental strife until we have built Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land—and village clubs are doubtless part of the structure—but let us remember that with bad buildings we shall have no pleasant land.

Most promoters of clubs will be faced with the difficulty of raising funds for an adequate building, but I would counsel them to make a great effort to secure enough to provide a reasonably substantial fabric, in the interests of ultimate economy. For example, very thin walls mean a cold building. This means more elaborate heating apparatus and the burning of more coal. A village hall or institute that made its visitors shiver would soon become unpopular.

¹ *Cottage Building in Cob, Pisé, Chalk, and Clay*. Country Life Library.

If such a method saves a hundred pounds on first cost, but means an extra ten pounds a year on the coal bill, the economic advantage is not apparent. It may sound like a counsel of perfection to suggest that all windows and external doors should be of oak or teak, but they are worth an effort, for their provision means that no outside painting will be wanted every two or three years. It is the recurring cost of work like this that breaks the hearts of managing committees, yet if neglected the fabric will soon decay and call for more drastic repair. Internal plastered walls should be avoided as far as possible. If a village hall is used by Boy Scouts and other energetic folk, the plasterer's services are soon wanted to remove their impress; but it would be absurd to quell high spirits for fear of damaged plaster. A good red brick is satisfactory for the inside face of walls, for it can take little harm and does not readily grow shabby; but simple panelling is better.

These are the sort of considerations which building committees need to take into account. It is far better to begin by building one or two units of a complete scheme, say a hall and cloak room, *and build them well*, than attempt to finish the plan, with its club rooms, etc., and build shoddily. In all cases it is important to see the end of the scheme from the beginning, and to instruct the architect so to prepare his plan that, as the club grows in strength and prosperity, new rooms and features can be added as organic parts of a shapely and well-considered whole. There is no harm in an obviously temporary wall marking a future pre-determined extension: it may serve as a stimulus to orderly and generous minds.

It may even be a comfort for some prudent souls to know that foresight can ensure a nervous organiser against some at least of the results of possible failure. It is possible—for Mr. Keir Hett did it at Staplefield—to plan a village hall so that it can easily be transformed into a block of cottages. It needs careful arrangement of the plan and the

building of window openings which would be needed for cottages, but are superfluous for the hall, and their bricking up while the building continues in service as a club house. I do not advocate what seems an unduly nervous policy, but cite it rather as an example of what can be done and guarded against, if skilled professional advice is obtained. Most people, no doubt, will prefer to go ahead with their building without permitting themselves the fear that the village club will fail to make good.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY: THE IDEA OF THE VILLAGE CLUB

A needed focus for village life—The Village Clubs Association—Principles of its organisation—Scope of its activities.

ANYONE who knows intimately the English village knows also that it usually lacks a true focus for its people's activities. In the Middle Ages and later, the church life of the people yielded the cement which in some sort bound together gentle and simple. No one, for example, can look at the great parish churches of East Anglia without realising that all the people, not merely pious and wealthy donors, were behind the movement that builders expressed so nobly in stone. However much, and on whatever grounds, we may regret the decline of religious life in the villages and the schism of social life which has followed divergence in religious outlook, it is idle to ignore the fact that the church is no longer a common meeting ground. The village tap room has to a small extent served as a club, but not very worthily, and not at all properly for the youth of the countryside or for the women of the cottages.

The efforts to create a new focus in the village club during the last few decades have not been very successful, because they have not been the outcome of the people's own desire, but usually of the good will, sometimes authoritatively, even aggressively, displayed, of those who desired to lead the village in the right way.

But the War has changed the values and the characters even of our oldest institutions, much more of those which,

like the village club, had not become set. The case for the village club of the coming time cannot be stated better than in the words of the committee of the Village Clubs Association.

“The lines upon which many village clubs have in the past been conducted must be revised and widened to meet the new requirements of the rural population.

“There are tendencies operating in the English rural districts which make for a new and wider outlook, and a demand for more of the amenities of life. The old men have had their mental horizon extended, and the young men who are coming back to the land will not be content with the old conditions. Love for the land may draw them, for there is no more powerful magnet. As the sea draws those who are bred on its shores, so the land draws those who were born and bred on the countryside. But something more than the drudgery and monotony of daily toil is needed to retain men whose eyes have been opened to the fact that life is more than labour. The opportunity of reasonable recreation, of social intercourse, of mental development is as necessary to the rural worker as to the townsman. And not only to the men. Woman, and woman’s interests, will have to be reckoned with in the future, and her place in the community will have to be regarded from a new standpoint.

“The village community is the oldest of the units which make up the social and political structure of the nation. It still remains in form, but the communal spirit has decayed. This spirit can be revived—in many cases this has already been done—and the saving common sense of the community may be relied upon to ensure that the organisation of village life in the future shall be a development of the elements already existing, and not an attempt to introduce novel and alien elements. The foundation of all schemes should be reliance upon the communal spirit, so that everything which is attempted would not be imposed from the top,

but built up from the bottom. This may seem a hard saying to many of those who have devoted themselves with whole-hearted sincerity to the care and comfort of their poorer neighbours. In thousands of villages, the squire and his family have for generations exercised patriarchal sway over the humbler dwellers within their sphere of territorial interest. In many instances the hereditary and traditional relationship between the squire and the peasant was founded on a sense of real responsibility on the one side, and a frank acceptance of dependency on the other. The relationship, in fact, was really akin to the bond which held the tribe or clan together—the patriarchal tie. There is much that is admirable in such a relationship, but the system, which has long been moribund, is now dead, and the War, with the social forces it has unchained and developed, has buried it. Social evolution, whether for good or bad, has reached a further stage, and to-day it is becoming apparent that the village community of the twentieth century will be self-governing in all its relationships.

“ It is from this standpoint, and in the dry light of these facts, that the village club of the future must be regarded. It must be the centre of communal life and activity—a place where all the members of the community, of whatever degree, can meet on common, and equal, ground. In large centres of population there is ample scope for sectional enterprise. The men’s club, the boys’ club, the institute, the reading room, the free library, the allotments association, the football club, the cricket club, and a score of other specialised organisations may flourish side by side in the towns; in the village they must all be combined and co-ordinated, and it is an institution on these comprehensive lines that must be visualised.

“ The principles upon which the village club should be founded are therefore as follows :

“ (1) It should be the centre of all social activities, and of all forms of physical and mental recreation ;

- “ (2) It should be self-supporting and free from the elements of patronage ;
- “ (3) All inhabitants of the village, without distinction of class or opinion, and, when practicable, of both sexes, should be eligible for membership ;
- “ (4) The entire control should be vested in a Committee elected either by (a) the members, or (b) the members and all the residents of the parish who would be eligible for membership residing within a radius of three miles.

“ The Village Clubs Association exists to promote the establishment in rural villages throughout England, Scotland, and Wales of clubs conforming to these principles. It does so, or proposes ¹ to do so—

- “ (a) By enlisting the sympathy and assistance of all who are interested in this movement ;
- “ (b) By taking such action as may be necessary to ensure as far as possible that Clubs on these lines shall be provided, whether by the assistance of public funds or by private enterprise, in every suitable village ;
- “ (c) By entering into communication with those responsible for existing clubs and institutes in rural districts, and inviting them to adopt, if they have not already done so, the principles of the Association, and to become affiliated thereto ;
- “ (d) By co-operation, so far as possible, with existing organisations having cognate objects, and by

¹ The word “ proposes ” is used because the possibility of the Association carrying out its full programme depends upon the financial support received.

Persons interested in the movement are invited to become members of the Association on payment of a minimum subscription of five shillings, but it is hoped that those who are in sympathy with its objects will not restrict their subscriptions to the minimum, and will also contribute largely to the funds by means of donations. Cheques should be made payable to The Treasurers, Village Clubs Association, Martin's Bank, Lombard Street, E.C.3.

assisting to co-ordinate the various agencies working for the amelioration of social conditions in the rural districts ;

- “ (e) By assisting to form village clubs on the lines above indicated ;
- “ (f) By supplying plans for suitable buildings, and model rules for the constitution and management of village clubs ;
- “ (g) By securing, through combination, the purchase of equipment, papers, games, and other club necessities at the lowest possible prices ;
- “ (h) By supplying qualified lecturers on subjects of local or general interest, and by providing lanterns, slides, cinema films, and other necessities for entertainments, whether required for the collection of funds or for the ordinary purposes of club management ;
- “ (i) By disseminating information and promoting discussion on subjects of interest to members, such as the principles of national and local administration, educational advancement, hygiene, household economy, horticulture, goat and bee keeping, village industries, etc. ;
- “ (j) By giving advice and, in exceptional circumstances, rendering such assistance as may be possible towards initial outlay and capital expenditure.”

Springing as it did from that vital little organisation, the Agricultural Club, with its membership of landowners, farmers, and rural labourers meeting on equal terms to discuss the reconstruction of the countryside, the Village Clubs Association is well equipped for its task. I need refer it to no more than to say that everyone who is concerned to start a village club on the right lines or to help it to a successful career, will do well to join the Association and keep in constant touch with its expanding activities.

In the Appendices to this book I have reprinted from the Association's pamphlets some of the wise and skilled advice it gives to the promoters and committees of clubs, but would warn my readers to take these extracts only as appetisers, and to refer direct to the Association for its latest publications. I have, moreover, with the Committee's permission, incorporated in my text extracts from others of its publications, without specific acknowledgment. The movement grows, and with it the experience and helpfulness of those who watch and promote its steady development. What I have reprinted will necessarily be revised and extended from time to time.

The main function of this introductory chapter is to draw attention to the fact that a central body exists for the aid of everyone who sees in the village club a potent instrument for the regeneration of the rural life of Britain. The Association's office is at 14A, Iddesleigh House, Caxton Street, S.W., and its General Secretary is the Hon. R. E. S. Barrington.

CHAPTER II

VILLAGE HALLS WITHOUT CLUB ROOMS

Purposes of a hall—Platform planning—The simplest type—Open timber roofs—Museum uses—"Artists' rooms"—Tilted lantern screen—The Prince of Wales and village clubs—Fees for hiring hall—Cost of maintenance.

WHEN a village club has been constituted the first question for its committee to determine is how it shall be housed; but it should be remembered at the outset that Alcæus' word of cities—that they are made not of stone and wood, but of men—will be true of village clubs also: they will owe their usefulness neither to handsome buildings nor to model rules, but to living and persistent enthusiasm for a valuable social organism. The building will depend on the scope which the club proposes for its activities, but, as these will always be both many and desirable, finance will be in most cases the limiting factor. Generally, the primary need will be a large room for meetings, though Chapter III shows that in some villages the club room rather than the hall has been regarded as the main consideration. I deal first, therefore, with the type of building which provides a village hall without club rooms, except in so far as the hall can be divided into two for club or institute use. It has been suggested by one devoted promoter of village club life that the hall should be distinct from the institute, as the former is used chiefly in the winter and the latter equally all the year round. Even if this arrangement were ideal, as to which I have considerable doubt, there remains the strong financial objection. It is obvious that two

buildings of a cubic content of, say, sixty thousand feet will be much more costly than one of the same dimensions, because of the additional external walls and roofs, and the doubled systems of drainage, water supply, heating, etc. Where low first cost is important, therefore—and it is the crucial factor in the majority of such undertakings—the combination of hall and institute under one roof is likely to prove a necessity.

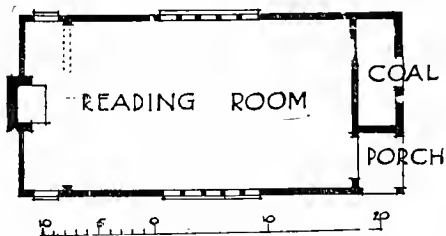
The hall must be a large room, adequately ventilated and furnished with a suitable stage. This will be the platform of the lecturer with his magic lantern, the stage for concerts and other amusements. Here Boy Scouts' meetings will take place in the winter evenings, alternating with dances for the older members, glee parties, Adult School classes, and assemblies for scores of purposes, grave and gay.

It is often convenient to extend the platform to the first truss of the roof, for this will give a good hanging-place for the curtain, necessary for theatrical performances and useful for breaking the room into two and making it more comfortable for small gatherings.

As one of the most popular uses of the hall in the present day will be for dancing, a stage has a double value. It makes an admirable place for the elders to sit and look on, out of the way of the dancers, and, if the space beneath it is slightly sunk, a safe place can be found to store such chairs as may not be needed. The end stage wall may well be finished in fine white plaster, to serve instead of a sheet for magic-lantern or cinematograph entertainments. Another useful contrivance is a thick wooden bar at the head of the wall where the roof springs, because, on the top side of such a bar, struts or supports for scenery can be nailed temporarily without damaging the walls.

There are other points in platform planning which should be considered. The lighting should be contrived so that anyone standing at the back to read music, etc., can do so without strain. This is often overlooked.

When there is to be a curtain, the platform should be brought forward a few feet in front of where it will hang. The small front part of the platform thus cut off by the curtain does not interfere with properties, etc., which are always farther back, but it is useful as giving a place for a speaker



1.—THE SIMPLEST TYPE OF PLAN.

to stand when the curtain is down. Also it improves acoustic values. If a singer at a concert or a speaker at a meeting can stand in front of the beam to which the curtain



2.—HALL AT HARRINGWORTH.

P. Morley Horder.

is attached his voice issues clear of what would otherwise be an obstacle.

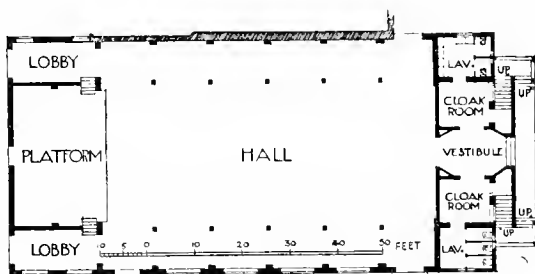
The village hall, in its simplest and cheapest form, can be provided by an old army hut, but a building of a temporary

sort, though better than none at all, should be regarded only as the last resort when the financing of a permanent building seems impossible. Galvanised iron is an unpleasant material, and makes a hall hot in summer and cold in winter. Before the War there was an alternative worth consideration, viz. to build with hollow terra-cotta tiles 3 in. thick, but it is doubtful whether these, if now obtainable, would be cheaper than brick. Figs. 1 and 2 show a hall at Haringworth, Northamptonshire, constructed in this way. It may be regarded almost as a permanent building, while the pre-War cost of it was little more than for a galvanised iron shed. It represents the village hall reduced to its lowest terms. As the plan indicates, it is a simple oblong room, 29 ft. long and 15 ft. wide, with a porch and a coal-house. While used chiefly as a reading room it is in plan a hall, and therefore appears properly in this chapter, rather than in Chapter III. The total cost, exclusive of foundations, was £112 10s., a figure which now makes the mouth water. The foundations and the large end fireplace and chimney were put in by the villagers. Mr. Morley Horder, who designed it, was content to make it a plain, barn-like structure. The merits of the material include great strength and resistance to both heat and cold. The terra-cotta blocks have a surface which is quite good enough to show both externally and internally; but it is better, where possible, to plaster the outside of the walls. The right way to frame these buildings, and to reinforce the tiles in order to secure sufficient strength, requires some experience in design, but there are no constructional difficulties to dismay a small local builder. The Haringworth Hall was erected very rapidly, and was dry and ready for use immediately on completion. Fig. 2 shows that while the architect has reduced the building to its lowest architectural terms, it is altogether inoffensive in appearance.

The next development from this simplest type of plan is in the provision of a platform at one end and one or more

cloak rooms at the entrance. A valuable example of this is to be seen in the outskirts of Croydon, and was designed by Mr. Curtis Green (figs. 3 to 5). Right and left of the vestibule excellent cloak room and lavatory accommodation is provided. The hall seats 900, and is, of course, very much larger than is required for an ordinary village. None the less, it is an interesting type, because its pre-War cubic-foot price worked out at 4*d.* only. Its open timber roof is a good feature, and though highly attractive, is of inexpensive construction. This type of roof was first used for a similar hall

in Wales by Mr. R. W. Schultz Weir. The Croydon Hall is chiefly used for Adult School classes, lectures, social meetings, conferences and



3.—HALL OF ADULT SCHOOL, CROYDON.

Lads' Life Brigades. It was given by Mr. Theodore Crossfield, and is owned and managed by the Society of Friends. It will be noticed that the platform is a permanent one built on a brick wall. Though satisfactory for such a large building, it is doubtful if this is a wise device for a small village hall. In the ordinary way a very good platform can be made by having rather tall seating forms, which can be bolted together with rods, for platform purposes, and covered with plank flooring in sections. This allows the space occupied by the platform to be thrown into the body of the hall when it is being used for purposes that do not require a raised space. On each side of the platform there is a small lobby, hardly big enough for use as dressing rooms if entertainments are afoot, and lacking, moreover, the lavatory accommodation

which is very necessary in connection with dressing rooms. A very admirable feature of the building is its lighting by clerestory windows (fig. 5). This gives an uninterrupted

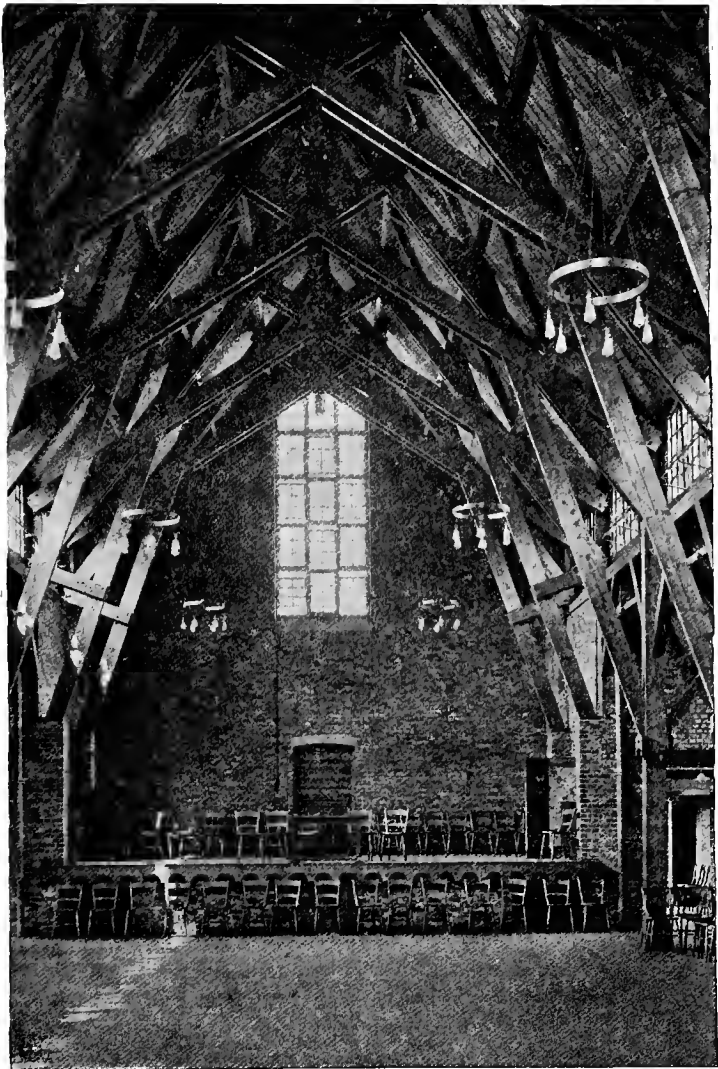


Curtis Green.

4.—HALL AT CROYDON: ENTRANCE.

wall space from the floor level to the springing of the roof. This is a valuable provision in an ordinary village hall—for the reason that some such halls (notably that at Eynsford) are made the home of a local museum—an important use. Here may be exhibited curiosities of the neighbourhood. On the walls may hang old drawings and photographs of historical local buildings that have been destroyed; a case containing, perhaps, Roman coins that have been dug up in the neighbourhood; portraits of famous men who have come from the village; and

other objects that will stimulate local pride and patriotism. It is very important, however, that such museums should be strictly local in their purview. Neighbouring people will often be glad to offer a set of spears from Polynesia, or a row of idols from an Indian temple; but these should



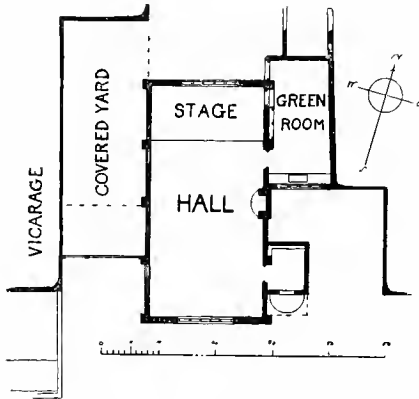
5.—IN THE ADULT SCHOOL, CROYDON.

Curtis Green.

be politely but firmly declined, as they will occupy space better devoted to objects of strictly local interest.

The next development in planning is to provide a practi-

cable artists' room, adjoining the platform. A good ex-



6.—PLAN, CHALGROVE.

ample of this was designed by Mr. G. Berkeley Wills at Chalgrove, Oxfordshire (figs. 6 and 7). As it was built close to the vicarage, advantage was taken of the wall of the latter to provide a covered yard between it and the hall. Its cost in 1906, £430, represented 6*d.* a cubic foot.

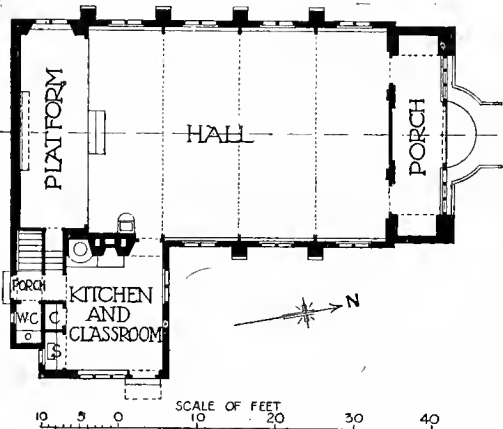
A variation of this plan is to be seen in Mr. F. W. Troup's treatment of Wootton Fitzpaine Hall (figs. 8 and 9), where



G. Berkeley Wills.

7.—CHALGROVE VILLAGE HALL, OXFORDSHIRE.

he has provided the next most important element, a kitchen. This can also be used as the artists' room for entertainments, because from it there is access to the platform, and it also serves as a class room on occasion. The internal treatment is interesting, for Mr. Troup carried the roof on four oak crutches, which are brought low down on to the walls, and account for the little buttresses outside. A good feature of the interior is a large white plaster screen for a magic lantern on the wall behind the platform. It



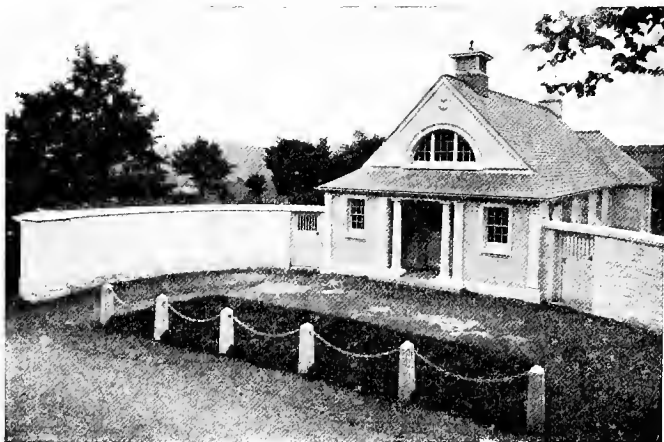
F. W. Troup.
8.—PLAN: WOOTTON FITZPAINE.

walls, and account for the little buttresses outside. A good feature of the interior is a large white plaster screen for a magic lantern on the wall behind the platform. It

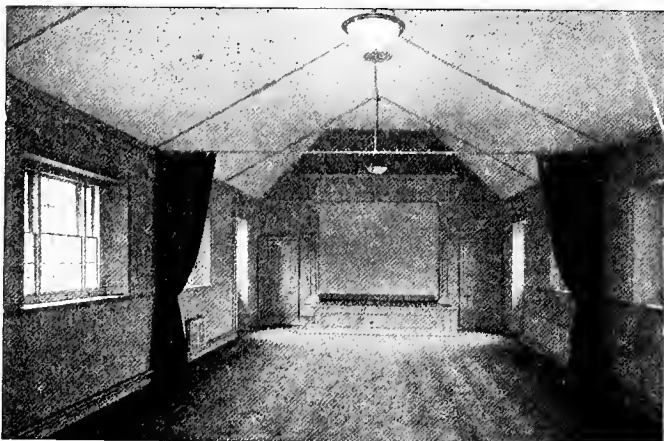


F. W. Troup.
9.—WOOTTON FITZPAINE VILLAGE HALL.

is slightly tilted forward, so that its surface is at right angles to the rays of light from the lantern, a device which ensures good and easy focussing. Where practicable, it



10.—STOKE CLIMSLAND FROM THE ROAD.



Richardson & Gill.

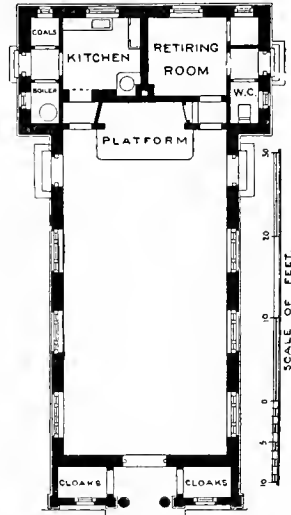
11.—AT STOKE CLIMSLAND: INTERIOR.

is very desirable to have a permanent screen of this kind rather than a movable sheet.

Stoke Climsland owes its hall to the fact that the village

is within the Duchy of Cornwall, and the building shown in figs. 10 to 12 was the gift of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, always a model landlord. Instead of having, as in the last example, a single room to serve the purpose of artists' room (or retiring room) and kitchen, there are two rooms with suitable offices adjoining. Messrs. Richardson & Gill have given character and dignity to the little building by setting it back from the main road and providing curved wing walls to emphasise the carriage drive which leads to the main entrance.

Very similar in accommodation, but with the kitchen and artists' room (also used as a committee room) right and left of the platform instead of behind it, is the hall at Slip End (figs. 13 to 15). It was built by public subscription, local and general, and is open to free use for any purpose having a social, educational, or religious object. Much advantage of this freedom is taken for work under the auspices of the Adult School movement. It is owned by local trustees, but the practical control is in the hands of a committee, elected from among the members of the Men's Adult School. The cost of upkeep is provided by weekly collections at the school, by a club subscription from members, and by the letting of the hall for general purposes. It is interesting to note the maintenance charges for 1911, a typical pre-War year. They amounted to about £25, the principal items being: lighting and heating, £10; caretaker, £13; insurance, £1 2s. 6d.; piano tuning, 10s. 6d. The fee for the hall when the entertainment is



12.—PLAN, STOKE CLIMSLAND.

for personal profit is double what is charged when it is used for social purposes ; but no charge is made for any parochial purpose, as, for example, a concert for the Nursing Fund. The hall seats 230 people, and its pre-War cost was £737 14s.,

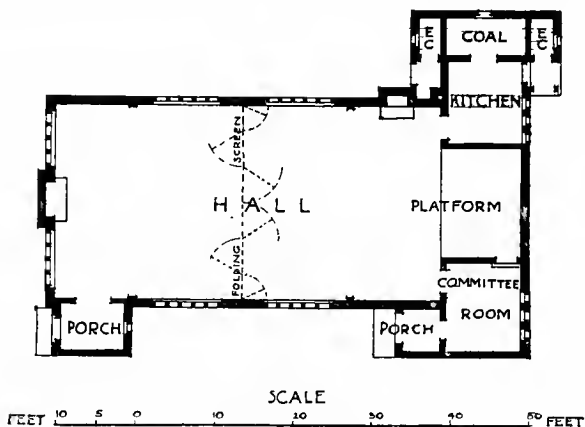


P. Monty Horder.

13.—VILLAGE HALL AT SLIP END.

exclusive of the acetylene-lighting plant. This represents a cubic-foot cost of $4\frac{1}{2}d$. Attention is drawn to the folding screen which divides the hall and adds to the variety of uses to which it can be put. The wood panelling on the

walls is not an extravagance, but a wise alternative to a plastered surface, which is liable to certain damage when



14.—PLAN: SLIP END.

chairs are moved. Those who control the hall have been impressed by the value of the building in stimulating an



15.—INTERIOR OF HALL: SLIP END.
P. Morley Horder.



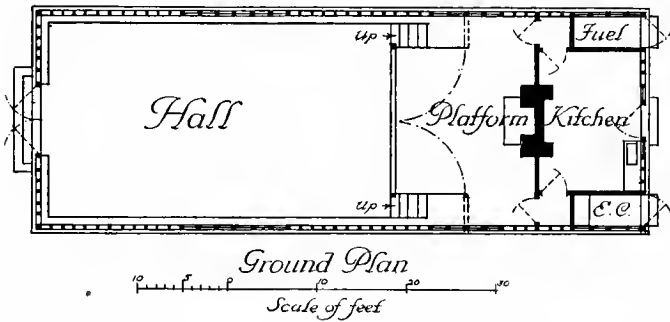
16.—INTERIOR OF HALL, HESTERCOMBE.



Sir Edwin Lutyens, A.R.A.

17.—AT HESTERCOMBE.

interest in simple village architecture. Some at least of the people who see it appreciate the pleasant effects secured by the straightforward use of local materials, and the architectural quality achieved by reasonable proportions without the adventitious aid of ornament. Despite the cheapness of the building, its solid and careful construction has provided against the recurrence of repair expenditure, with the result that the income is more than sufficient to pay the expenses of upkeep. Out of the profits during the year 1911, grants were made to the local hospital and the



18.—PLAN: HESTERCOMBE.

parish Nursing Fund, while enough remained to entertain at tea all the villagers over sixty years of age.

The village hall at Hestercombe (figs. 16 to 18) is a good example of the use of local materials, for it is built of honest half-timber work. The plan shows a very simple disposition of the three elements of hall, platform, and kitchen with E.C. and fuel store. The charming brick fireplace at the back of the platform is a characteristic bit of Lutyens work.

The village hall at Brantham, Suffolk (figs. 19 and 20), was erected in 1914 to the designs of Messrs. Searle & Searle, for Mr. C. P. Merriam, J.P.

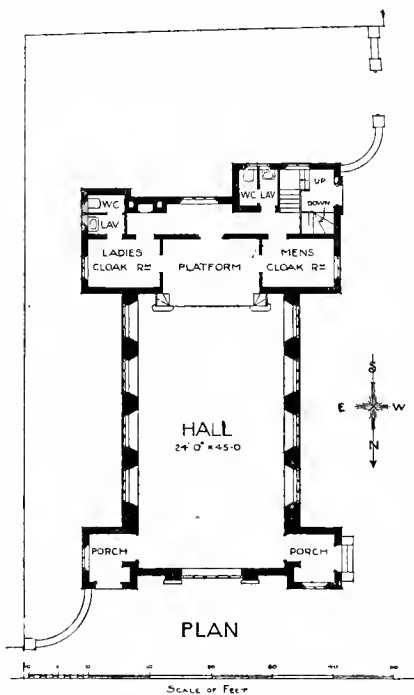
Two entrance porches give direct access from the road to the hall, which is well lighted at the sides and north

end by large windows. The special features in the hall are the massive piers between the windows, and the roof, which is constructed with open timber trusses with curved braces.

At the south end is a raised platform, 3 ft. above the floor of the hall and approached therefrom by steps at each side.

Cloak rooms and lavatory accommodation for both

sexes are provided as shown on the plan (fig. 19), with a connecting corridor at the back of the platform. The cloak rooms give access to the platform and form convenient dressing rooms for dramatic entertainments. From the platform level a staircase descends to a side entrance to the road and to the basement, which extends under the whole of the southern block, and contains kitchen, with copper and sink, larder, heating and fuel chambers, and a large chair store. Convenient openings are provided between the basement under the platform and the main



19.—PLAN: BRANTHAM.

hall, to allow refreshments, chairs, etc., to be passed through.

Heating is by hot-water pipes, carried in channels with open gratings in the floor of the hall, and by radiators in the porches, cloak rooms, etc. The main boiler is in the basement. Lighting is by electricity. Footlights are provided for the platform.

Seating accommodation is by chairs, and seats are formed between the windows. These lift up to form lockers, in

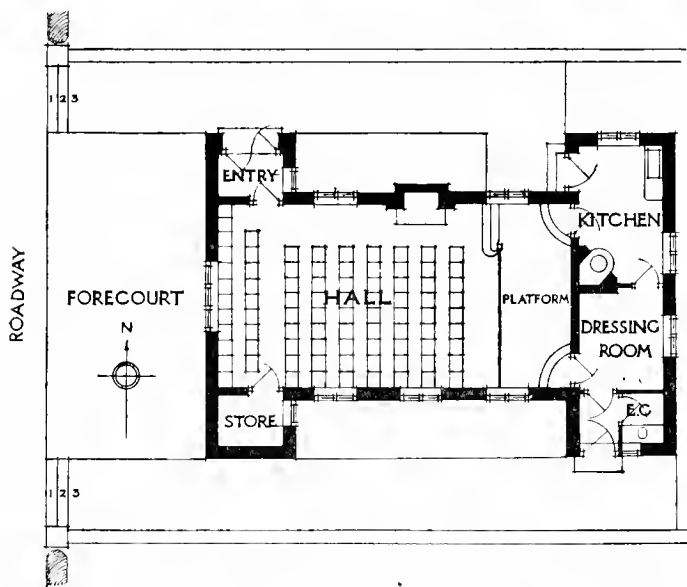


Searle & Searle

20.—VILLAGE HALL, BRANTHAM, SUFFOLK.

which can be kept chess boards, draughts, and other games.

The cost of the building amounted to just over fifteen hundred pounds.



Oswald P. Milne.

21.—LLANWERN VILLAGE HALL.

The hall is used for concerts, dramatic entertainments, dances, whist drives, public meetings, lantern lectures, and other social gatherings. The seating accommodation for an ordinary concert is about 250, and for a whist drive about 100 (twenty-five tables). No club rooms were provided, because the hall is not the headquarters of the social club, for which other accommodation exists in the village. This avoids a great deal of clashing.

The stone-built hall at Llanwern, designed by Mr. O. P. Milne, is a delightful little thing, sufficiently explained by photograph and plan in fig. 21.

CHAPTER III

VILLAGE CLUBS WITHOUT HALLS

Importance of kitchens—Terms for caretakers.

SOME village clubs have gone on the principle that the provision of reading rooms, etc., is of more importance than a hall for entertainments. I do not share that view, but where it is taken the architectural problem is obviously very different, and a few solutions of it may be described.

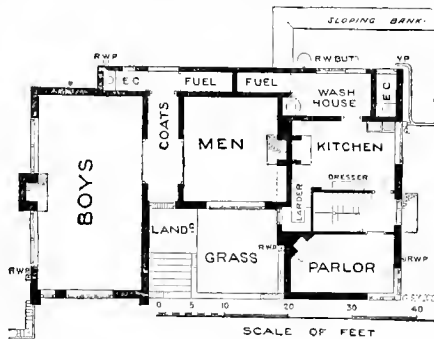
At the Thursley Institute, Surrey (figs. 22 to 24), designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, there is a large room for boys, with a billiard table, and a smaller reading room for men.



Sir Edwin Lutyens, A.R.A.

Above the caretaker's kitchen and parlour there are two bedrooms.

In any type of club building, a kitchen is exceedingly desirable, if not essential, for teas are wanted, whether for entertainments or, in the case of an institute pure and simple, for the members who use it for reading and games. Wherever possible, it is well, as at Thursley, to add caretaker's quarters, so that a man and his wife may live on the premises,

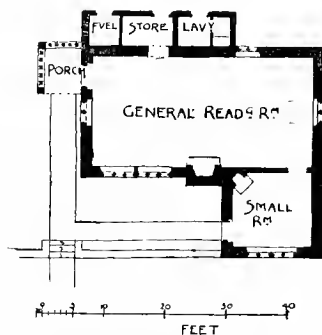


23.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN.



24.—THURSLEY INSTITUTE, SURREY: VIEW FROM THE ROAD. Sir Edwin Lutyens.

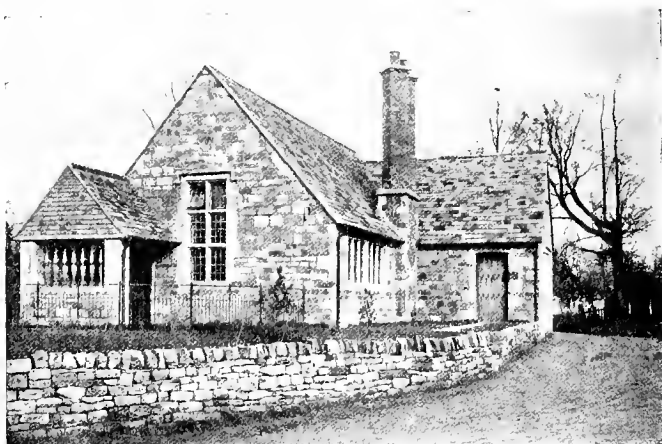
the kitchen being their living room. In one case in my mind, the man is an agricultural labourer, and his wife cleans the hall, in return for living rent free and having free fuel. She makes the teas, and adds a little to her income by a small profit on them.



25.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN:
ASTON-SUB-EDGE.

Mr. Guy Dawber's typical little Cotswold building at Aston-sub-Edge, Gloucestershire (figs. 25 and 26), is a good example of the village club in almost its simplest form, with a large general reading room and a smaller room opening from it.

The village club at St. Osyth, Essex, was built in 1912 for Mrs. Cowley of St. Osyth's Priory, and is of the purely club type. Designed



E. Guy Dawber.

26.—AT ASTON-SUB-EDGE, GLOS.

by Messrs. Forsyth & Maule, with an admirable appreciation of the traditions of East Anglian brick architecture,

it makes an attractive as well as a useful feature of the village. The plans (fig. 28) show more simply than a description how the people of St. Osyth spend their leisure. The men have a general club room and a billiard



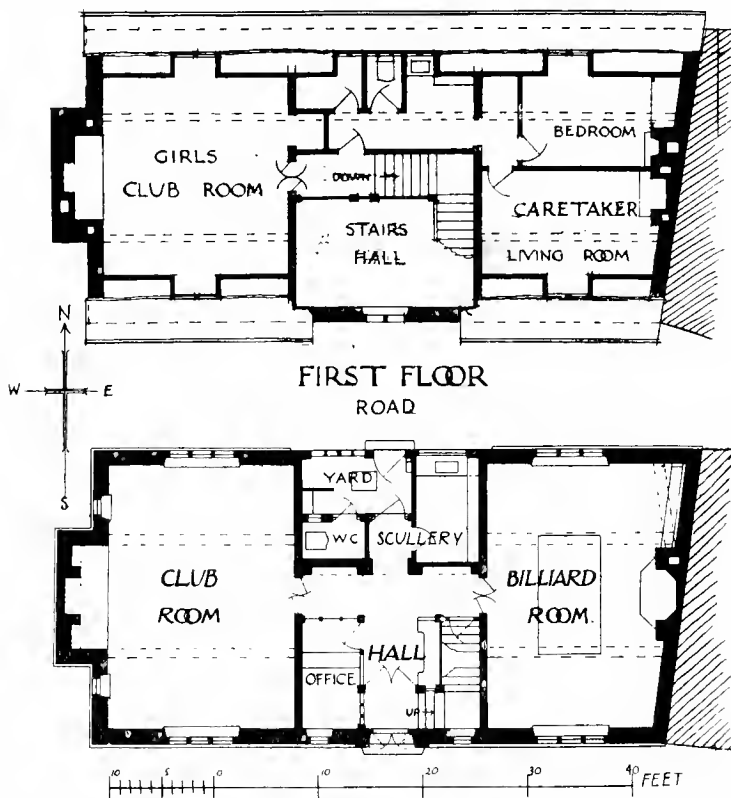
Forsyth & Maule.

27.—ST. OSYTH VILLAGE CLUB.

room on the ground floor, and the first floor is occupied by a girl's club room and by the caretaker's quarters.

There is, of course, no end to the possibilities of elaborating the plan of such a club house. A study of the plans illustrated in the next chapter will show that gym-

nasium, bath rooms, library and reading room are valued features of those institutes which combine an assembly hall with club rooms of various kinds. A scheme, which



28.—PLANS OF VILLAGE CLUB AT ST. OSYTH.

eliminates the assembly hall because one already exists, may yet be developed on club lines and give full opportunity for the architect's ingenuity.

CHAPTER IV

*VILLAGE CLUBS WITH HALL AND
CLUB ROOMS*

Rifle range—Boy Scouts' needs—Gymnasium equipment—Fourteen examples of variations on a common type—Ingenious uses of collapsible partitions.

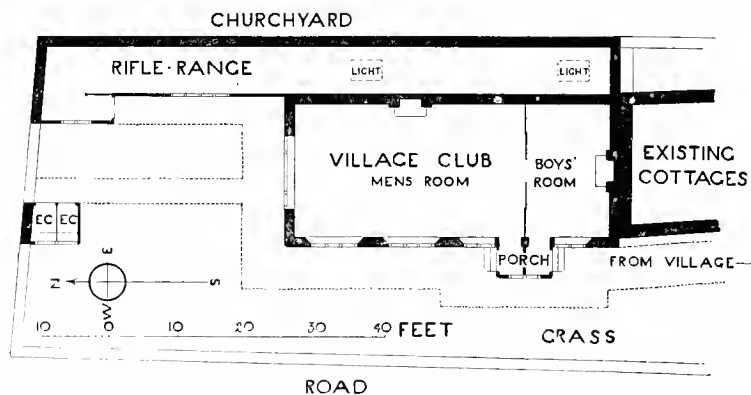
THE third main type of club building is that which combines the assembly hall with distinctive rooms devised for club purposes. A quite usual addition, especially in places where the Boy Scout movement is active, is a rifle range. A good example of this is at Bradford-on-Tone, a club house designed by Messrs. Samson & Colthurst, which shows well what can be done with very simple means. The ex-



Samson & Colthurst.

29.—AT BRADFORD-ON-TONE THE EXTERIOR.

penditure on it not long before the War may well make envious the promoter of a similar scheme in these days of



30.—BRADFORD-ON-TONE CLUB. GROUND PLAN.

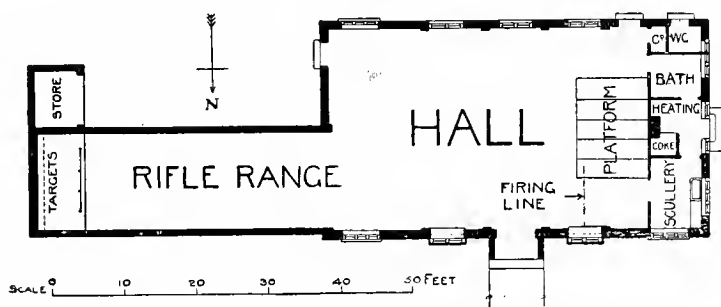
inflated building prices. The total cost, including the rifle range, repairs to adjoining cottage and boundary



Samson & Colthurst.

31.—VILLAGE CLUB, BRADFORD-ON-TONE.

walls, was about £400. The village hall alone worked out at $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ per cubic foot, but the stone for walling came from two cottages on the site. The plan (fig. 30), shows that the



32.—PLAN OF HALL AT NEW MARSTON.

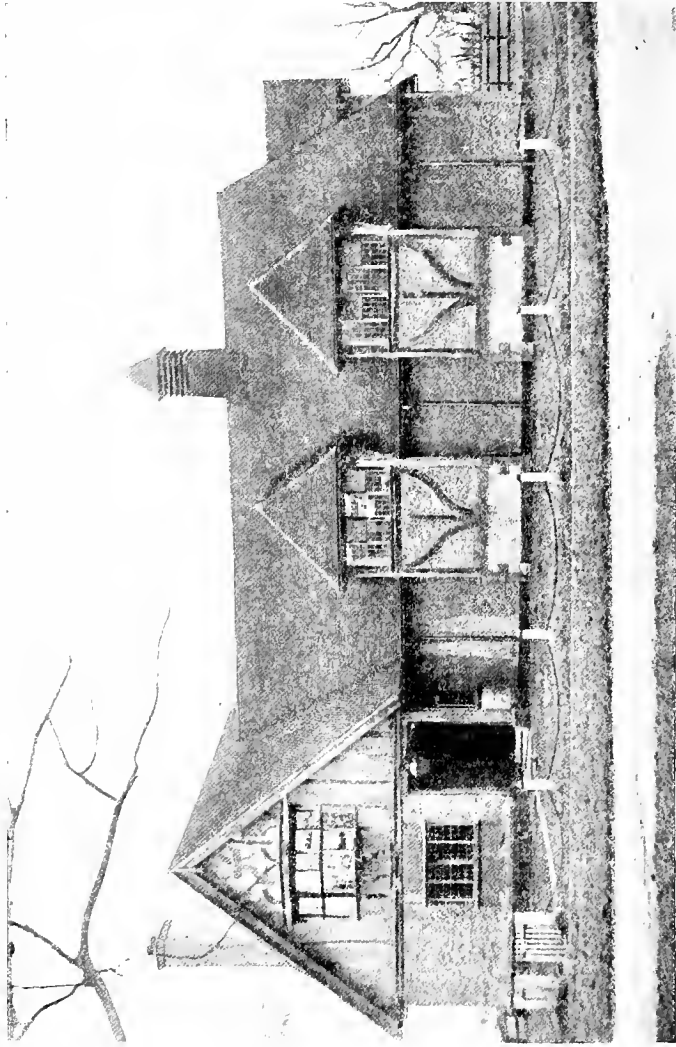


Whiting & Peto.

33.—SCOUTS' HALL, NEW MARSTON, NEAR OXFORD.

building provides one hall for occasional use for dances, concerts, dramatic performances, meetings, etc. It is divided by a sliding screen for everyday use as a club.

The small room is reserved for boys ; the larger is for men, and serves as a reading and games room. When used for

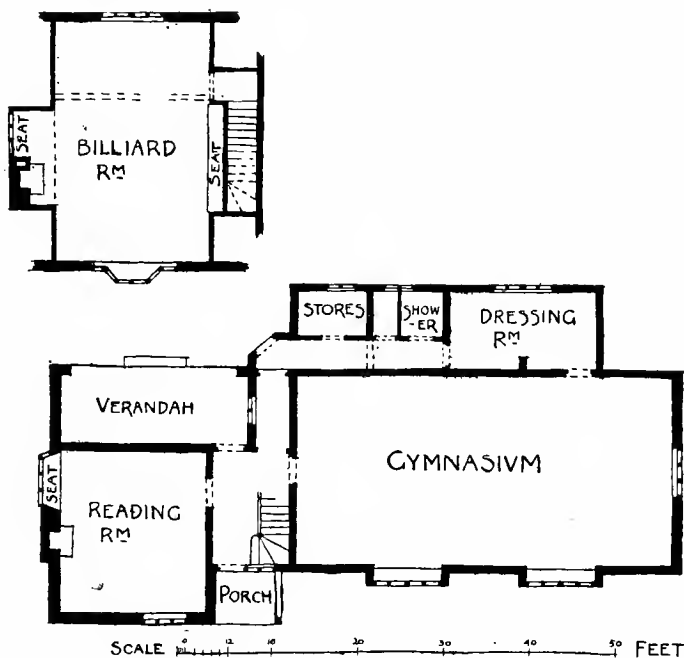


E. Guy Dawber.

34.—SANDON VILLAGE CLUB.

entertainments the screen slides back and the boys' room is converted into a stage.

At New Marston, near Oxford, Messrs. Whiting & Peto designed for Miss Peto a hall intended primarily for the use of Boy Scouts as an instruction and drill hall (figs. 32 and 33); hence the important place in the plan taken by the rifle range, and the bath room which fills the space which might otherwise have been a green room. But the hall is



35.—SANDON VILLAGE CLUB. GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS.

also used for general village purposes, such as concerts and meetings. There is a practical thought in the platform made in five sections, which, when distributed, form the tables for tea meetings. The wall behind the platform is finished with a smooth surface plaster, and whitened as a screen for lantern shows, a better and cheaper device than a sheet on a blind roller.

The Earl of Harrowby has long been a generous supporter of the movement for village clubs and has given more than

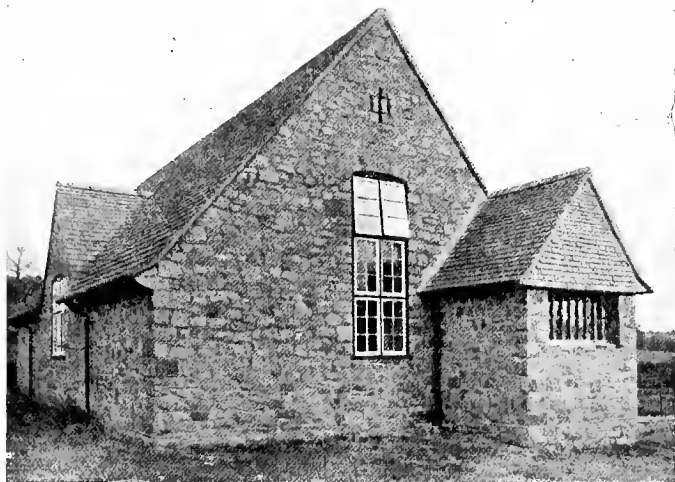
one to places in which he has interests. The hall at Sandon (figs. 34 and 35) has a special character which might often



E. Guy Dawber.

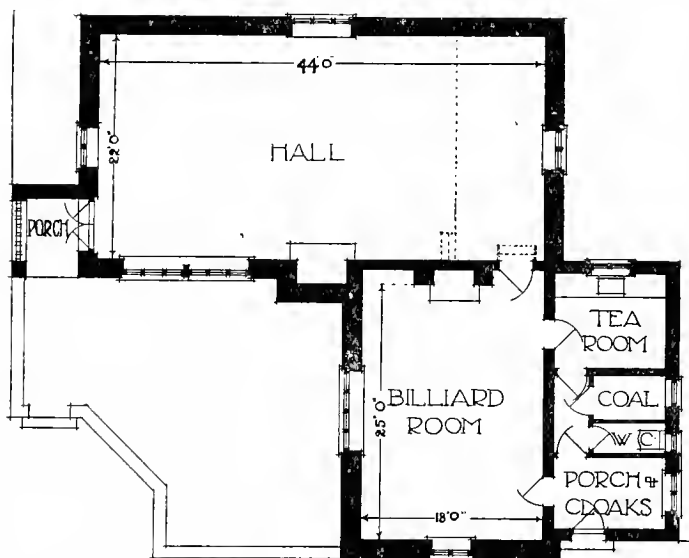
36.—ITTON VILLAGE CLUB.

be given to a hall with resulting satisfaction and health to the village lads. It is fitted as a gymnasium, with dressing-room and shower bath adjoining, and so serves more pur-



E. Guy Dawber.

37.—PORCH AT ITTON.



PLAN

INCHES $\frac{1}{2}$ 7 10 12 FEET

38.—PLAN OF ITTON CLUB HOUSE.

poses than the usual concerts and meetings. There is a good billiard room on the first floor above the reading room and veranda. The latter is a good feature and is very acceptable, because it overlooks the cricket field. The ownership of the building remains vested in Lord Harrowby as the chief landowner of Sandon, and he maintains it, but its use is controlled by a committee. In perhaps the majority of cases village halls may be hired by



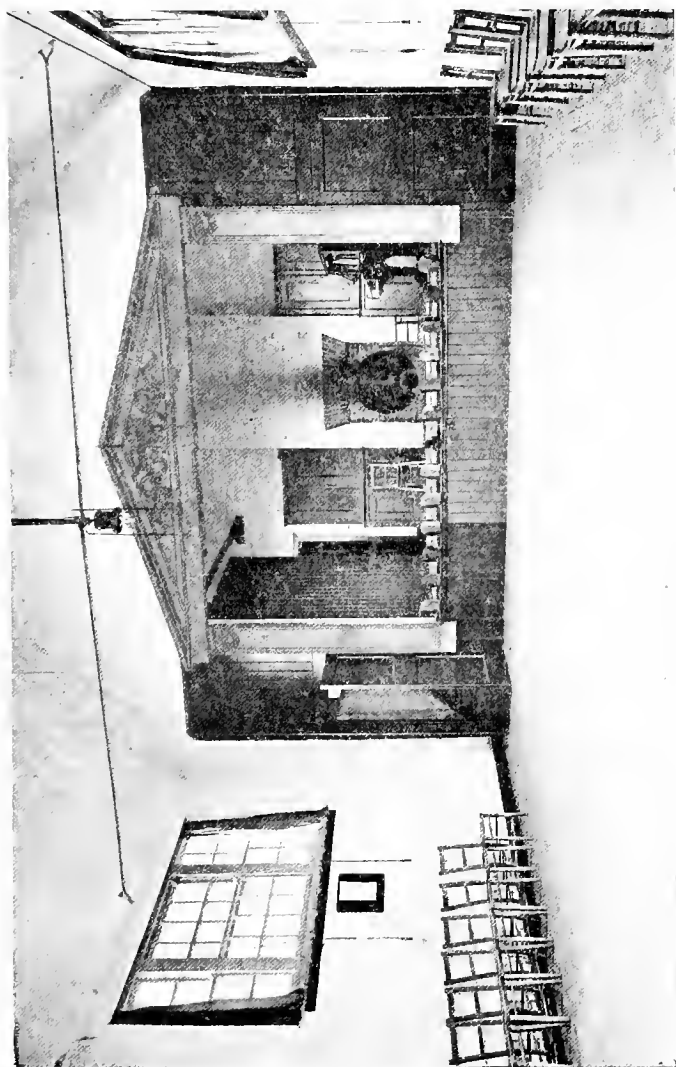
Sir Edwin Lutyens, A.R.A.

39.—OTFORD VILLAGE HALL.

any respectable person for meetings, but that is not the case at Sandon, or at Norton, where Lord Harrowby also provided the building. Both halls were designed by Mr. E. Guy Dawber with his accustomed skill, as was also the club at Itton (figs. 36 to 38). This charming building is set at the junction of two roads, and the L-shaped plan, with the stout masonry chimney at the internal angle, fits the site well. There are two entrances, one for the hall, the other for the billiard room and subsidiary offices.

The village hall at Otford, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens,

is particularly instructive, because the plan (fig. 41) shows the hall as so far built (illustrated in figs. 39 and 40), and

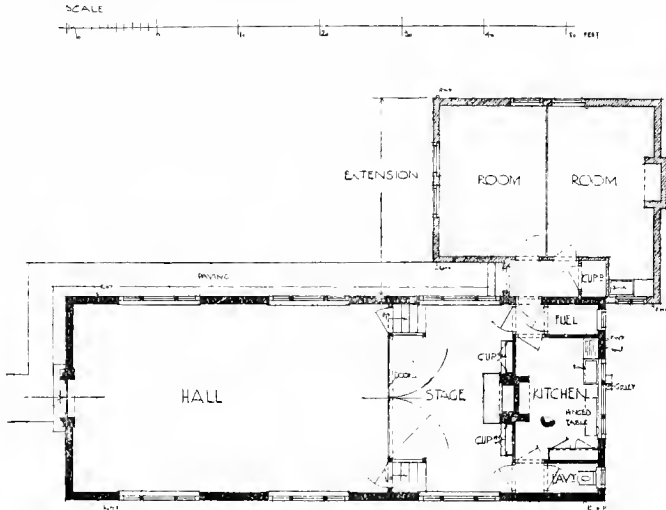


Sir Edwin Lutyens, A.R.A.

40.—OTFORD VILLAGE HALL.

two additional club rooms which are projected but not yet in being. The planning of the hall as so far completed

is simple; the platform end can be divided from the main part of the hall by doors to make a separate room. This is a very practical arrangement which can always be devised where the platform is a permanent structure. The division of the platform room from the main hall is



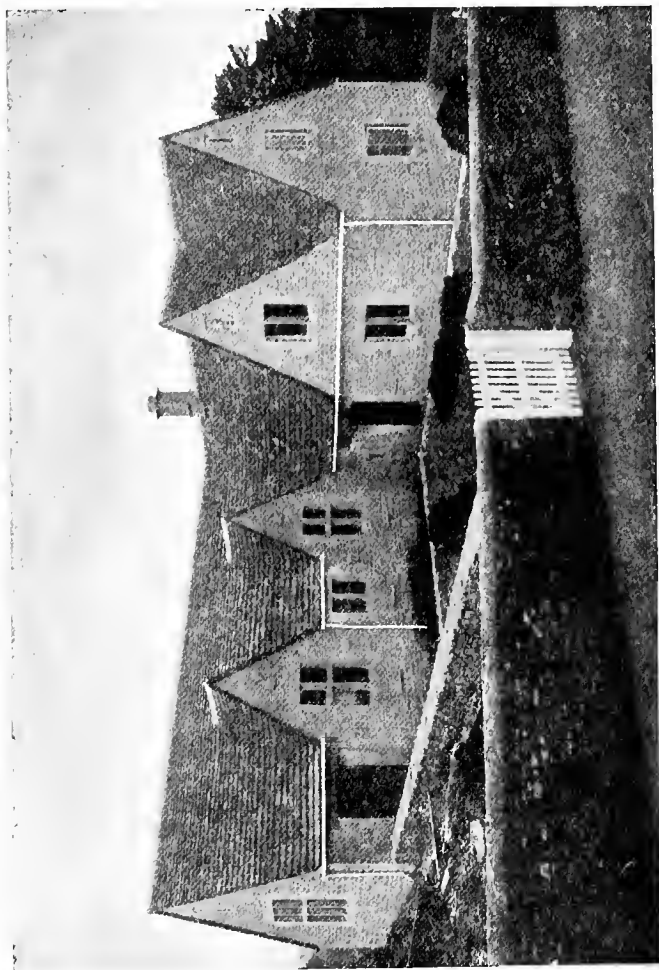
Sir Edwin Lutyens, A.R.A.

41.—OTFORD VILLAGE HALL.

here done by a big pair of folding doors; another method is by an "accordion" partition which can be shut back in narrow folds, one half to each side. There is also at Otford a small kitchen with gas stove behind the platform, so that refreshments can be prepared.

My next example is in the typical Cotswold village of Sapperton (figs. 42 and 43). It was given by Earl and Countess Bathurst, and the architects were Mr. A. Ernest Barnsley and Mr. Norman Jewson. The total pre-War cost of the building was £650, and the architects' fees, heating, lighting, and furniture (exclusive, however, of billiard room, piano, and gymnasium fittings), brought the total cost to £831. Figured on the cost of the building alone, the cubic-foot price represented $5\frac{1}{4}d$. As the walls are of

the masonry typical in the district, this cost was exceptionally low. The hall is used for all social meetings common to a village, and possesses in addition the advantage

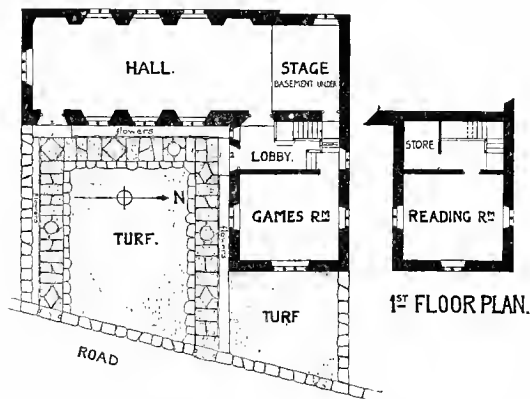


Ernest Barnsley & Norman Jewson.

42.—VILLAGE CLUB AT SAPPERTON.

of a billiard room and gymnasium. The latter is, naturally, very popular with the Boy Scouts of Sapperton. The givers have vested the control in trustees and a sub com-

mittee. The pre-War cost of upkeep was between £30 and £40 a year, part of which was made up by a hiring charge when the hall was used by private persons.



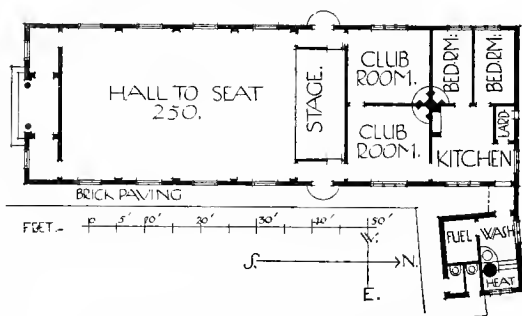
Ernest Barnsley & Norman Jewson.

43.—VILLAGE CLUB AT SAPPERTON.

A very good point in the furnishing is the provision in the large hall of six elm fitments, which are a combination of chest, seat, and table, and fit into recesses. These

are very useful for storing the various paraphernalia used by those who frequent the club.

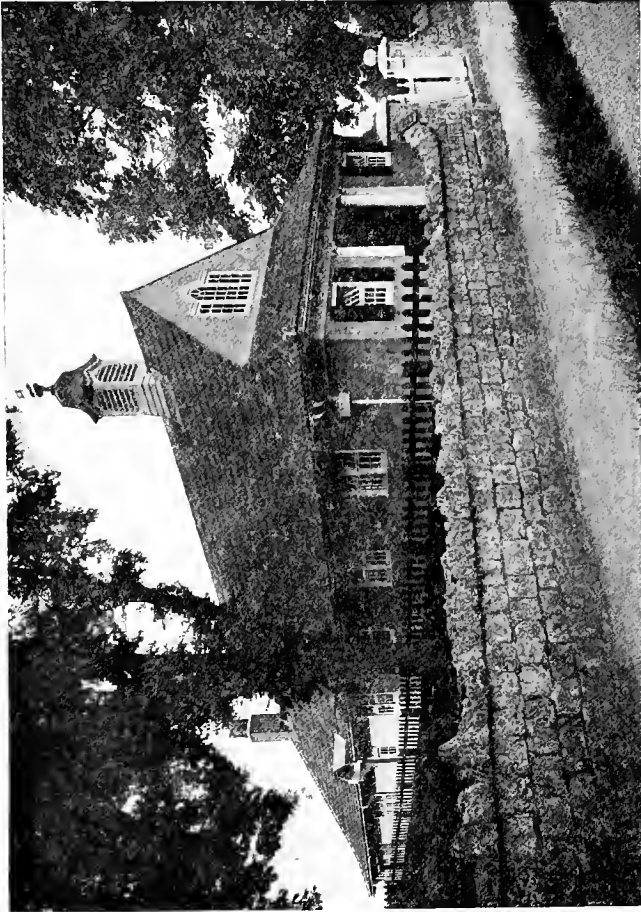
The village hall at Stone, Bucks, designed by Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis (figs. 44 and 45), is a good and typical example of what could be done before the War for a reasonable sum. The total cost of the building, as shown by the plan, was £724, which works out at 3*d.* a cubic foot. A later



44.—VILLAGE HALL AT STONE.

addition was a hot-water radiator heating system throughout the building, on which £72 was expended, but this

may be regarded as somewhat of a luxury. The cost of all furnishing, including chairs for the hall, was £80. The total payments therefore, on all counts, amounted to £876. It will be noticed that there are a living room,

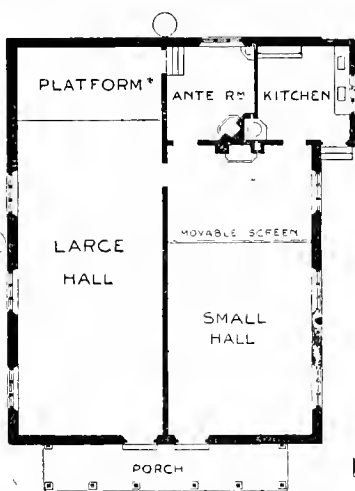


Clough Williams-Ellis.

45.—AT STONE, BUCKS.

kitchen, and two bedrooms for the caretaker, and two club rooms between them and the hall. These two rooms serve as dressing rooms when there are musical or theatrical entertainments, and as reading rooms, etc., for the purpose

of the village clubs on other evenings. They are reserved for the women's club on two nights in the week. In this



46.—PLAN AT ASHBY FOLVILLE.

building are focussed all the local activities, and the Parish Council holds its meetings there. The hall has a satisfactory dancing floor, which is a good point. Stone is an "open" village, *i.e.* there is not one great landowner who acts as a general providence, and the cost of the building was subscribed widely in the locality.

Ashby Folville, near

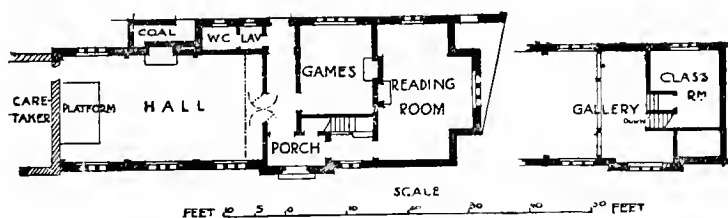


Ely, Barker & Hoyland

47.—VILLAGE CLUB, ASHBY FOLVILLE.

Leicester, has a good village club (figs. 46 and 47), designed in 1913 by Messrs. Ely, Barker & Hoyland, for the late Mr. H. H. Smith-Carrington, Lord of the Manor. It is of an unusual and interesting type, because it boasts of two halls side by side; the larger with a platform for entertainments, the smaller, divisible by folding partitions, for classes and meetings. The ante room serves both as an artists' room, adjoining the platform, and for general purposes, and there is a practical kitchen.

The village hall at Pitsford, Northamptonshire, was presented to the village by Mr. H. Manfield, M.P., and designed by Mr. Morley Horder (figs. 48 to 50). The walls are of masonry, and rather more variety than is usual has been imparted to the elevations, the interest of which is helped by the setting of the building on its sloping site. Nevertheless, the pre-War cost (exclusive of lighting and furnishing) was no more than £849, which works out at 5*d.* a cubic foot. The hall (inclusive of the accommodation



48.—PLAN: PITSFORD.

of the gallery) seats 140 people. The gallery serves to accommodate the musicians, and there is a room in the roof opening from it. On the lower floor are two recreation rooms. There is access from the hall to the adjoining cottage, which just appears in fig. 50, and serves as a home for the caretaker. Perhaps not the least satisfactory feature of this hall is that, though Mr. Manfield provided it, he has given it to the parish, and the Parish Council controls it through a committee elected by the village.

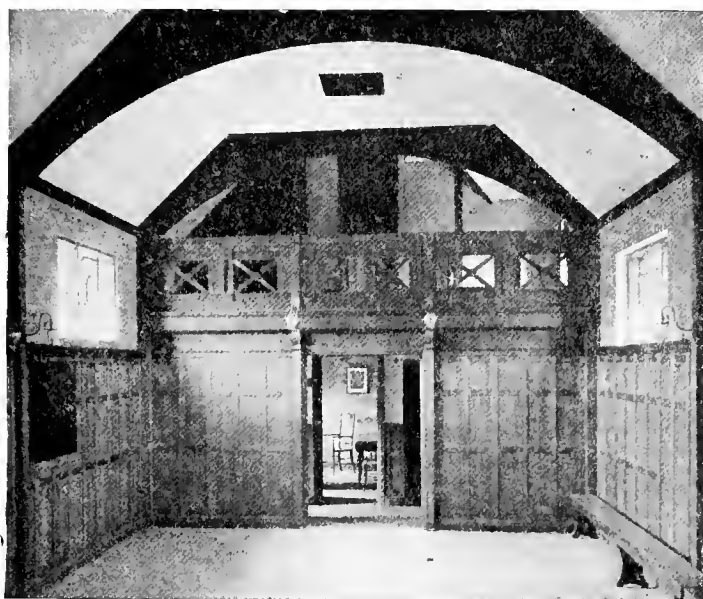
The cost of upkeep and repairs is found chiefly by the profits on entertainments which are given by the committee



P. Morley Horder.

49.—PITSFORD VILLAGE HALL, NORTHANTS.

and by the letting of the hall for private purposes. Pitsford village is an "open" one without a controlling land-



P. Morley Horder.

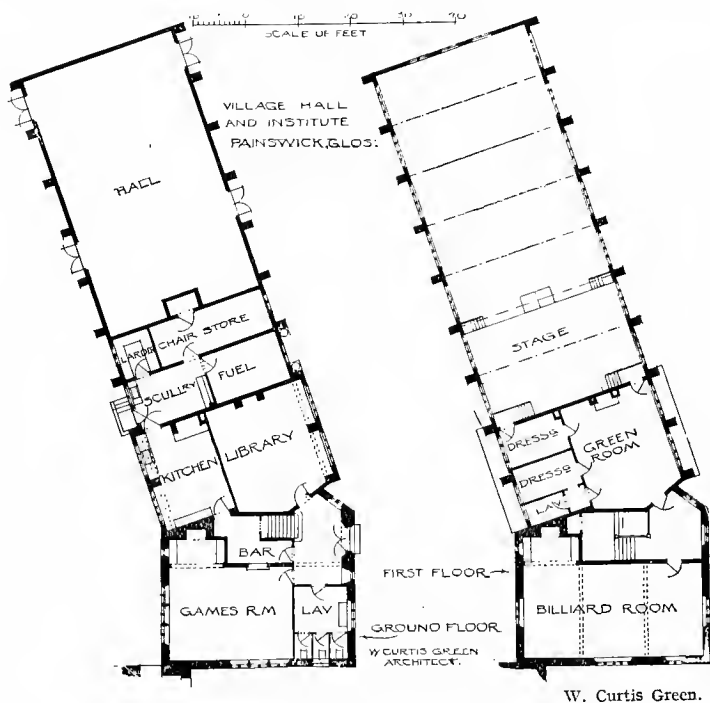
50.—INTERIOR, PITSFORD VILLAGE HALL.

owner, and with the aid of some subscriptions given by kindly neighbours the hall is self-supporting.

Mr. Curtis Green, in his planning of the village institute at Painswick, Gloucestershire, has provided for a variety of needs in an interesting fashion. Fig. 51 shows that he had to deal with an extremely confined site of varying level in the middle of the village. All round are old stone houses of the usual Cotswold type. It was therefore essential to preserve the character of the place, but hardly less important to keep down the cost. Mr. Curtis Green got the best of both worlds by building the club house on the street front in stone, and by placing the large and expensive hall at the back out of sight, where it was possible to use concrete block walls without damaging the amenities of the village. The plan shows that the public can enter the hall by four pairs of doors without going into the club,

but there is access to the stage from the club. The downward slope of the ground from the hall end made it possible to get a chair store, a fuel store, and a scullery under the stage; and a trap-door in the hall floor next the stage makes it very simple to move the chairs up and down.

The plans of two buildings designed as parish halls by



51.—PLANS OF VILLAGE INSTITUTE, PAINSWICK.

Mr. Ernest G. Cole, are worthy of special study, because they show the virtue of adaptability to various uses. The hall in Dulwich Village, built for the parish of St. Barnabas (figs. 52 and 53), can be regarded as in two main divisions—the large hall, with vestibule, cloak rooms, lavatories, and platform; and the group behind, consisting of the small hall and a pair of retiring rooms with lavatories. Strate-

gically placed so that it will serve either group is the kitchen, with a heating chamber under. Now mark the ease with which either group can assume new shapes. By folding back the collapsible partitions which divide the vestibule from the two flanking cloak rooms, a large entrance hall is provided, which is very useful for big functions such as flower shows.

In the same way the small hall, with its flanking retiring



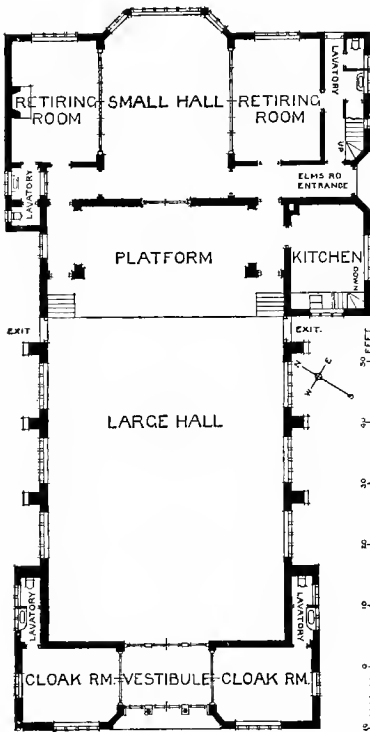
52.—DULWICH VILLAGE HALL.

Ernest Cole.

rooms, can be made into one large one for social functions, also by folding back collapsible partitions. Accommodation for the caretaker is provided in a storey over the small hall end of the building.

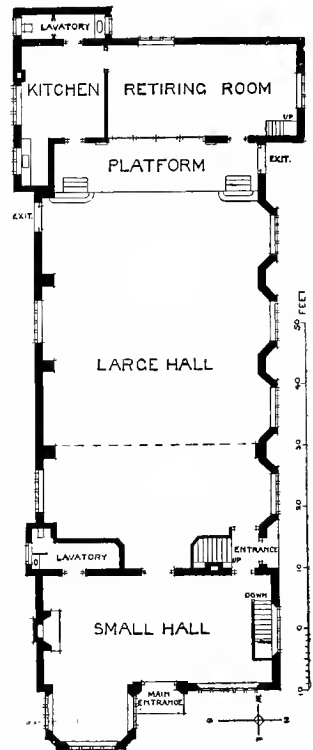
The hall at Norbury, built for the parish of St. Philip, is in some ways even more ingeniously devised (figs. 53 and 54). The large hall can be entered either directly by a side entrance or through the small hall. A gallery is built across the east end of the hall, and is provided with a collapsible partition across the front, which enables the gallery to be used as a room on occasion. The flooring of the gallery

is on three levels, so as to give a good view of the platform, but the topmost stage of the three is built loose, so that it can be dropped into the lowest stage, thus bringing the whole gallery floor to a level, for use when the gallery is partitioned off as a room. But the architect's fertility



Ernest Cole.

53.—PLAN: DULWICH.



Ernest Cole.

54.—PLAN: NORBURY.

in planning did not end there. Behind the platform are a retiring room and kitchen. Dividing the former from the platform is a collapsible partition, so hung that it can be folded against the north pier, then turned and drawn across the retiring room, so as to give increased platform accommodation when needed. Mr. Cole makes collapsible

partitions perform feats almost acrobatic. Fig. 55 shows the platform deepened in the fashioned described. It also reveals a small gallery over the retiring room, which would, I imagine, serve ideally the purpose of Romeo if the people of Norbury break out in Shakespearean performance, and failing that must be a very convenient storage room.



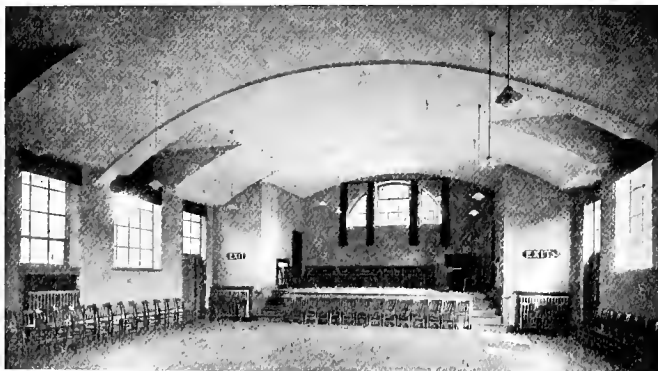
Ernest Cole.

55.—VILLAGE HALL, NORBURY.

The parish hall of St. Saviour's, Scarborough, designed by Mr. Walter Bierley, is illustrated here as a good example of the provision of ample accommodation on a restricted site, and the plans of the three floors are reproduced in fig. 57. The hall (fig. 56) is well lighted from each side by large windows carried up to the ceiling, and has a boarded floor for dancing. At the east end of the hall is a stage 25 ft. by 15 ft. 6 in., raised 3 ft. above the hall. The space under the stage is available for storing chairs, tables, etc.

Ample entrances and exits are provided for every requirement of public safety, and they are so arranged that any part of the building can be separately used without

opening out the remainder of the rooms. At each side of the stage is a class room, 15 ft. by 14 ft., available also for retiring rooms for entertainers. Lavatory accommodation



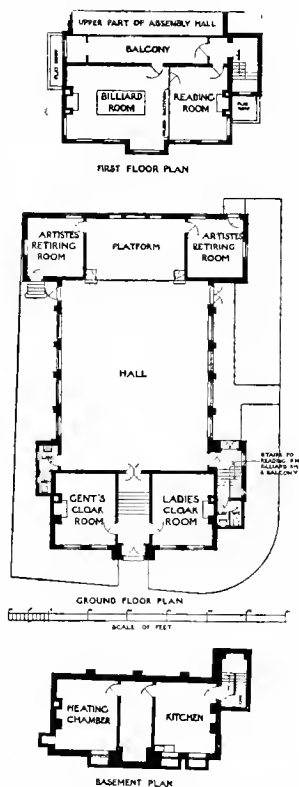
Walter Brierley.

56.—INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR OF HALL, SCARBOROUGH.

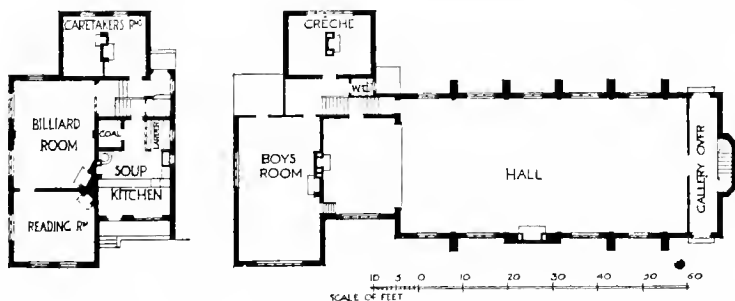
for ladies is provided at the north-west corner of the hall, and for men at the south-west corner, in conjunction with a separate entrance and staircase to the gallery and the

upper floor. On the upper floor is a gallery across the west end of the hall, which accommodates about forty people. Opening from it is a billiard room 24 ft. by 18 ft., large enough for a full-size table, and a reading or games room 18 ft. by 15 ft. These rooms are available as retiring and supper rooms in case of a dance. I am free to admit that this institute has an urban rather than rural character, but it is illustrated as an example of planning on three floors, instead of the more usual single level.

In fig. 58 is shown a plan by Mr. Ernest Newton, which is interesting as showing the provision of a crèche in the club of a semi-rural parish.



57.—PLANS :
ST. SAVIOUR'S, SCARBOROUGH.



Ernest Newton, R.A.
53.—PLANS OF A VILLAGE CLUB IN KENT.

CHAPTER V

*VILLAGE HALLS USED ALSO FOR CHURCH
PURPOSES*

Combining the ecclesiastical and social elements—Lord Macnaghten Memorial Hall—Examples at Toys Hill and Pixham—The problem of smoking.

THE Village Clubs Association works on the principle that a club should choose its members without distinction of creed, and be controlled by an elected committee. This should preclude its being run in the interest of church or chapel against the will of its members, but in villages or hamlets which have no church building it may be to the advantage of everyone that church and club shall join hands in providing a building for both ecclesiastical and social uses. There is no reason why such an arrangement should not work well. Happily in many villages the church hall or institute, though managed by the parson and his supporters, is a common meeting ground for all the inhabitants when they gather for social purposes. By the same token the inhabitants of many new hamlets of considerable size have combined to provide a hall which is a church on Sundays and a club room on week-days. This dual purpose calls for variations in planning and for special equipment, which demand considerable architectural skill. Indeed it may be said that because it takes many sorts of people to make a village, the most useful plan for a village club will be one which provides for its serving the maximum number of purposes without undue expenditure. The Giant's Causeway is not a place where an admirably devised

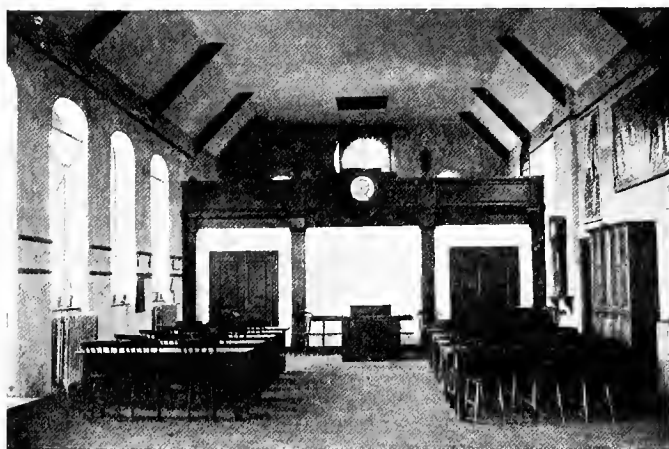
building for such purposes would naturally be sought, but the Lord Macnaghten Memorial Hall (figs. 59 to 61) is worth careful consideration. It stands on a commanding eminence that falls sheer to the Atlantic on the northern side in great cliffs of pillared basalt, while to the south and west the stone-walled fields slope gently down towards the valley of the Bush and the romantic ruins of



Clough Williams-Ellis.

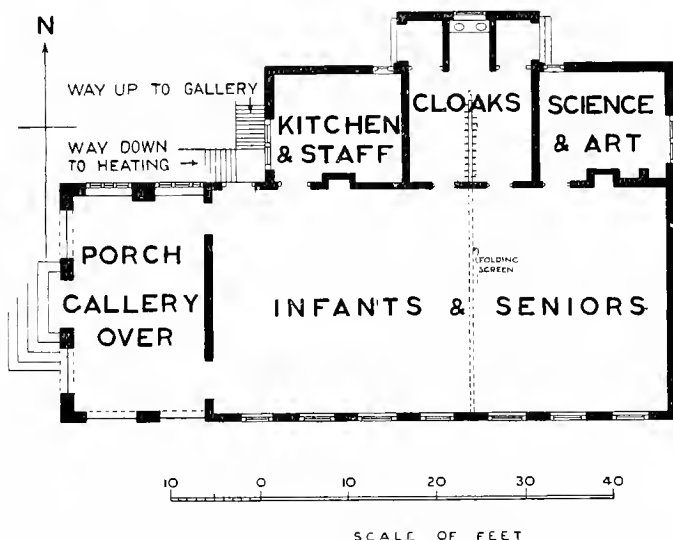
59.—LORD MACNAGHTEN MEMORIAL HALL, GIANT'S CAUSEWAY.

Dunluce. The Atlantic gales sweep violently, and none but a very solid building could stand up to the constant buffeting of the wind and the drenching rains that drive before the storms. Therefore, the hall was stoutly built and set under the lee of the hill. Only a shield of grey slate roof is shown to the prevailing winds, and the tall windows were ranged to the sun along the high white wall



Clough Williams-Ellis.

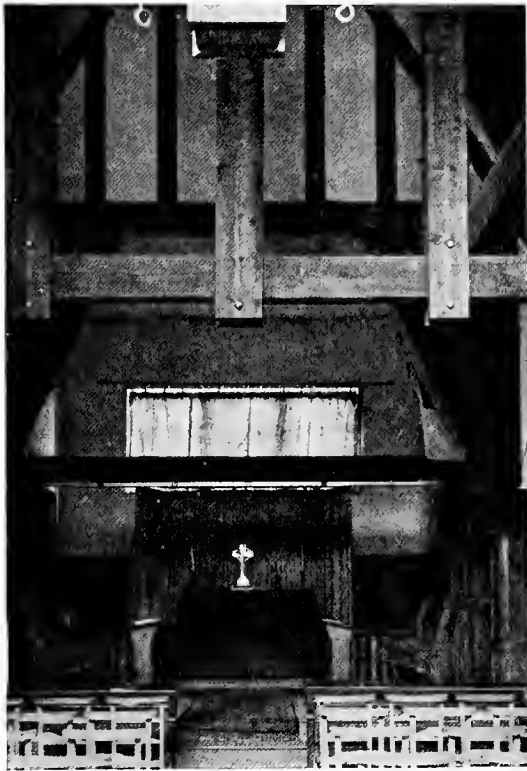
60.—WEST END OF HALL AT GIANT'S CAUSEWAY.



61.—PLAN OF LORD MACNAGHTEN HALL.

that looks due south across Ireland. It was begun during the last days of peace and finished early in the War. The walls are partly of local black basalt and partly of brick,

and the roof is covered with small rough Portmadoc slates. The architect, Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis, made provision for many purposes: The hall fulfils, under one roof, the several functions of church, school, assembly room, club,



J. A. Hallam.

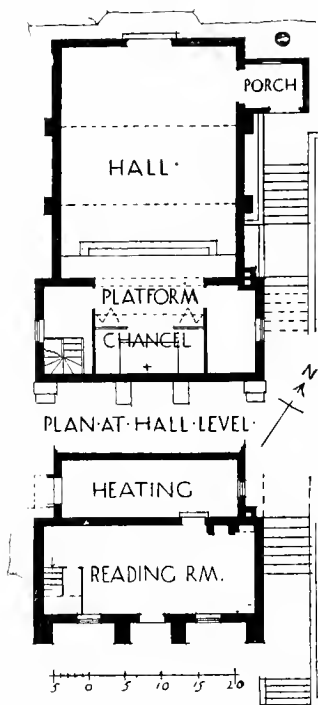
62.—INTERIOR OF TOYS HILL HALL, SHOWING THE SCREEN FOLDED BACK AND THE HALL READY FOR CHURCH USE.

lecture, concert and cinema hall. On ordinary week-days it is the school of the district, and a very good school too, admirably planned, furnished, warmed, and lighted, with a well-equipped science and art room and a convenient instructional kitchen and staff room. The deep porch, or

loggia, set to catch whatever sun there be, is for use as an open-air summer class room, and wet-weather play place for the infants, and as a sheltering porch for all those attending at the hall. The partition that divides infants and seniors is folded back, concertina-wise, against the walls when the place is required for public worship, instruction,

or amusement. When used for services a portable altar is placed in front of the gallery screen. When drama is afoot, a portable sectional stage is set up at the end opposite the gallery, or a sheet can be hung there for magic-lantern or cinema displays.

Another hall which serves religious as well as social purposes is at Toys Hill, near Brasted, the highest point in Kent. The plan (fig. 63) is arranged so that the little chancel is, in the ordinary way, cut off from the hall by a folding screen hanging from a beam. The part behind the screen has an altar raised a step above the platform level, is furnished with altar rails, and has been consecrated. The hall can, therefore, be put to



J. A. Hallam.
63.—PLAN OF TOYS HILL HALL.

full ecclesiastical use, as shown in fig. 61, but the closing of the screen enables it to be used for secular employment without offending any susceptibilities. As the site is on a steep hillside, the hall level is reached by an external flight of brick steps, and there is a good reading room beneath the platform end. Mr. J. Algernon Hallam

designed it with practical skill, as is shown by its costing only (before the War) £580.

An example of a room which is rather more church than hall is St. Martin's Church Room, Pixham, Surrey (figs. 64 and 65). Sir Edwin Lutyens, who designed it, describes it thus: "The plan consists of one large room, 25 ft.



Sir Edwin Lutyens, A.R.A.

64.—THE CHURCH ROOM, PIXHAM.

by 57 ft., with a daïs at the east end, while the ceiling is a plaster barrel springing from a red brick surbase, and is lighted by a series of high brick-built dormers on both sides. To the north of it is a small room, 16 ft. by 20 ft., with lobbies giving access to the outside, the big room, and platform. At the east end of the hall has been built a

60 *Combining Church and Social Uses*

sanctuary, 16 ft. square, covered by a low dome, built in chalk, tiles, and stone, carried upon pendentives formed by the four round arches supporting it. The conception of the building is that it should be built of local and simple



Sir Edwin Lutyens, A. R. A.

65.—THE CHURCH ROOM, PIXHAM.

materials, and by their use alone it should give evidence of the care, love, and reverence of its object." Social functions take place in the hall, and the sanctuary is divided off by a curtain, except at the time of Divine Service.

The use of one room at different times for sacred and profane purposes brings certain obvious limitations, and my own view is that a suitably appointed sanctuary should be divided from the main hall by a partition, as at Toys Hill, rather than by a curtain as at Pixham. There is also the difficulty that without some method of division, solid enough to give a clear sense of separation and to prevent the passage of smoke, it would hardly be seemly to allow tobacco in the hall. At Pixham it is, and in my judgment rightly, forbidden, but where a solid partition is provided I see no objection to it, if after, say, a smoking concert the hall end is fully aired.

The church hall is frankly an architectural effort to get the best of both worlds. It is very appropriate to have a sanctuary fitted with beautiful furniture, and it is very desirable that it should be consecrated for its purpose; but it also does away with some of the social values of the hall if smoking is forbidden when the sanctuary has been cut off. There are many institutions where a chapel and a room in which men smoke are divided only by a wall, however thin, and it would occur to no one to see irreverence in such a juxtaposition. The problem in a church hall, therefore, is to create the sense of solidity in the partition between its two chief parts, and this should not be difficult.

CHAPTER VI

KEMSING VILLAGE CLUB

A design untrammelled by economy—Hop-scotch courts—Movable platform—Rifle range—Bath rooms—Village hose cart—Tenure and management—Sale of intoxicants—Views of Land Settlement Committee.

THE village clubs so far illustrated have been chosen as normal examples of what should be possible in villages of varying size, where their provision depends on the subscriptions of the many, reinforced by the larger gifts of the few, but where there is no one with a full purse able and willing to take the whole burden. Sometimes, however, the claim of economy is not urgent, and the designer is free to consider, not the minimum of accommodation and architectural decency, but the more agreeable possibilities of a building that shall be a notable ornament to the village. Such was the happy position of Mr. Godfrey Pinkerton, the architect who designed the Kemsing club building. He was at liberty to omit nothing in reason that should add grace or long life to the village hall. He used that liberty to produce an effect that adds greatly to the charm of the place, and at the same time the managers are free from any fear of those repairs which inevitably follow cheap construction. In plan and equipment the building leaves nothing to be desired. It possesses two handsome entrances from the road, through attractive cloisters with open arcading of English oak. One leads to the public hall (fig. 66) and the other to the club room, which can thus be used quite independently. Between these two cloisters is a raised terrace, reached by a separate flight of steps (see frontis-

piece). Facing south, and provided with benches between the buttresses, it serves as a resting-place where old folk and wayfarers may rest themselves. Nor have the children been forgotten.

The terrace is paved with stone slabs and knapped flintwork, divided into panels by lines of Roman tiles on edge. At either end is set out a hop-scotch court. The origin of the game is lost in dim antiquity, but its fascination is perennial, and it duly appears in London streets at its proper season. One of its traditional forms, known as "coronation" hop-scotch, provides a spiral arrangement of the paving-stones, which is seen on the left of the plan reproduced in fig.



Godfrey Pinkerton.

66.—KEMSING: THE HALL ENTRANCE.

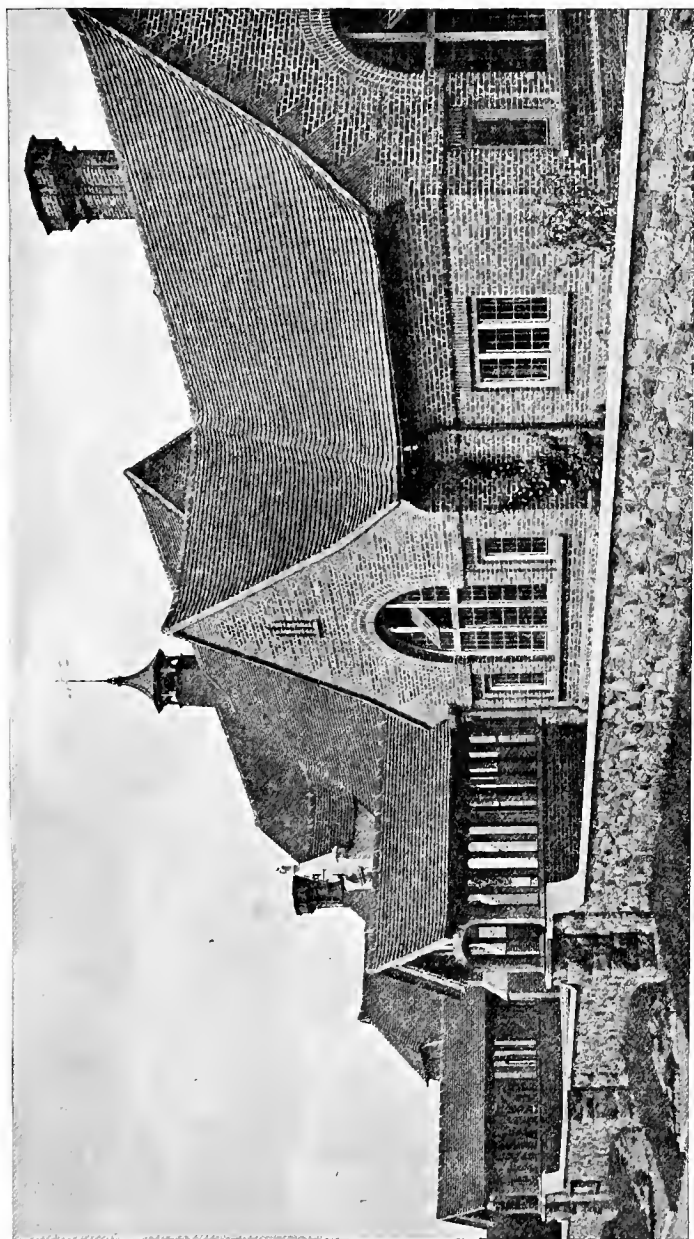
70. The player proceeds round the spiral, stone by stone, until the potsherd is kicked on to the last space, which is marked here by the Royal crown in bronze, let into the stone. This goal of the player's endeavour bears the

pleasant name of "pudding." If a mistake is made, or the effort breaks down altogether, the player retires, writing his or her name on the last paving-stone successfully negotiated. That the court was made in the year of King George's coronation was a happy coincidence which accounts for the addition of the date and crown. The other court on the east side of the terrace is for the more usual type of game, which demands for success rather less strenuous efforts.

At the head of the terrace steps, and set in the stone gabled projection, is a very delightful statue in bronze of St. Edith, a Saxon princess, and the patron saint of the village. The clock above the statue has a cast-lead dial, with gilded hands and ornament. Father Time broods above it, and beneath is the motto:

'TIS MINE
EACH PASSING HOUR TO TELL
'TIS THINE
TO USE IT ILL OR WELL.

The walls generally are of a small red brick of delightfully changeful colour, and the ashlar masonry is of Portland stone. The retaining walls are of a Kentish rag and ironstone, with joints garretted in the local manner. The pleasant appearance of the external oak work is due to its having been lime-whited as soon as built. When the building was finished, the lime was brushed off, but has left a grey tone which is very attractive. The interior of the hall (fig. 71) is made gay by the treatment of the roof, which is painted and stencilled in red and grey on a white ground. The platform is very practically contrived. It is made of seven trestle tables, each about 10 ft. by 2 ft. 6 in., which can be used for tea parties, flower shows, etc. When it is desired to make clear communication between the hall and the kitchen, one table is removed. When concerts and similar festivities are afoot, the club room and kitchen are available for the use of the performers.



Godfrey Pinkerton.

67.—KENSING VILLAGE HALL.

Another excellent provision is that of a rifle range. The middle of the counter in the cloak lobby at the entrance of the hall is made to open. From this point to a target on the back wall of the platform space a miniature rifle range of twenty yards is obtained. The targets can be lighted at night by using part of the platform footlights, which are movable, and connected by flexible tubing with the gas supply. A cupboard for rifles and ammunition is fixed in a recess behind the counter in the cloak lobby. The hall is heated both by hot air and two radiators, and petrol-gas not only provides for lighting, but also heats the bath geysers. There are two bath rooms at the west end of the building, with a separate entrance, and this provision is much appreciated in the village. Adjoining them is a home for the village fire hose cart. This is rented by the Parish Council, and a drying gallows for the hose is provided above the steps of the heating chamber. The caretaker's cottage adjoins the hall on its west side, and has a separate entrance. The planning of the club room at the east end of the block is very convenient, with its kitchen, lavatory, and store (fig. 72).

The building, when completed, was offered as a gift to the Parish Council, but there was some doubt as to whether that body had the power to raise a rate in aid, if the hall should not be self-supporting. Reference to the Parish Councils Act suggests that this caution was unnecessary. Be that as it may, it was thought more prudent to make a temporary arrangement, as follows: The Parish Council took the hall and its dependencies (such as the club room, kitchen, caretaker's cottage, baths, and fire hose shed) at a peppercorn rent for five years, and had the right at any time during that period to call upon the owner to complete the transfer of the whole in fee simple at his own expense. The Parish Council, therefore, is in the position of lessor (and potential owner) to the committee of management.

The committee of management consists of two members

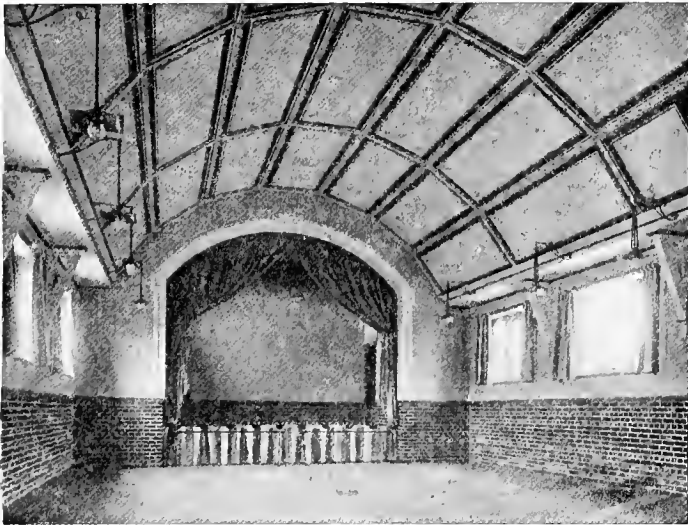
elected annually by the Parish Council (but not necessarily members of the Council), the vicar of the parish, the school-master, the owner for the time being of St. Clere, Kemsing, and a representative chosen by the Nonconformists of the village. The latter only have this right of appointment so long as they possess a building in the village set apart for



68.—ENTRANCE CLOISTER FROM TERRACE.

public worship. The committee has power to add to its number from among ratepayers or inhabitants of the parish, and women are thus eligible. The committee is responsible to the Council for the upkeep of the whole. It can let the village hall to any person for any purpose not contrary to law, order, or good morals. The hall can be hired at various rates. A political meeting pays a guinea if it originates in the parish, and two guineas if organised from outside. Other beneficent organisations, such as ambulance classes

sented on its committee. The object kept in view has been that the village should run its own affairs for itself, without interference from those members of the community who are less in touch with village life and the requirements of the average inhabitant. In case of financial disaster the Parish Council has the right of closing down everything. The committee of management lets the club room (fully furnished) to the club committee, which pays a reasonable



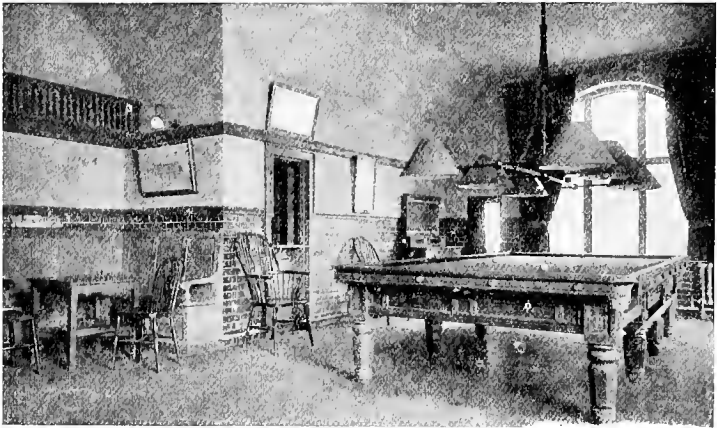
71.—INTERIOR OF HALL, KEMSING.

annual rent. The club is open daily on weekdays from 6 to 10 p.m., which hours can be extended by special resolution of the club committee at any time, and the subscription is eightpence per month. It is registered under the Friendly Societies' Act, and is affiliated both to the Working Men's Club Institute and Union in London and to the Kent County Working Men's Club Union.

During the War, and until the Christmas of 1918, the club practically surrendered its premises for use as an hospital, retaining only the store and bar as a *pro forma* occupation, but

twenty-five members continued to pay their subscriptions. Since peace came the club has started again with fifty-nine members, and games and entertainments are in full swing again. It is now proposed to form a football club in connection with the hall, and there are hopes of a recreation ground being provided for the village, to be held probably by the same management committee under the Parish Council. It seems clear that the hall and club will be the centre of all village activities in the future.

A special reference must be made to the canteen. In



Godfrey Pinkerton.

72.—THE CLUB ROOM AT KEMSING.

toxicants and excisable articles are sold. The weekly expenditure per head amounts to about *4d.* or *5½d.* for refreshments, including mineral waters and tobacco.

This is a good place to consider the important question of the sale of intoxicants in village clubs, on which no decided body of opinion has yet been formed.

In old days Blue Books were not usually the place to find recommendations of a very human sort, but the Report of the Ministry of Reconstruction's Committee on Land Settlement is a most encouraging document. They appreciate

that the social side of rural development is as vital as the economic. It follows that they regard village clubs and halls as an important feature of village reconstruction if returned soldiers and sailors are to be settled satisfactorily on the land. Their general recommendations, as well as their notes on the drink question, are worth setting out in detail :

“ The village hall should be placed under the full control of the village community on the most democratic basis, and kept entirely free from any connection with creed, party, or class distinction. It should be available for meetings of various kinds, *whether social or political*, and music and the cinema should be permanent features in the amenities provided to remove the stigma of dullness from the life of the villager.”

The Report then continues :

“ The question of the granting of drink licences to such halls demands some consideration. We consider that, in the event of the State taking over the general control of public houses, the public house should be attached to the village hall. So long, however, as no public house of this kind exists, it might be best not to prevent the sale of intoxicants in the village hall, should that course be desired by a majority of the villagers. In any event, the principle of ‘ disinterested management ’ is essential. No profits beyond a limited interest on capital should go to any individual from the sale of intoxicants, and we contemplate a refreshment house rather than a drinking place. A communal kitchen might well be attached, possibly to be managed with the help of the Women’s Institute.”

It is probable that the assumption by the State of direct control of public houses, by ownership instead of merely by restrictive regulations and police supervision, is a long way ahead yet. Meanwhile it is likely that some promoters of village clubs will fear to import into their activities so controversial a matter as the sale of stimulants, and it would certainly be better to avoid a rock of offence unless,

as at Kemsing, village opinion approves of club members being able to buy intoxicants if they please. It should be said in favour of such a liberty, that nowhere so well as in a village club can public opinion control drinking in the interests of moderation and good manners.

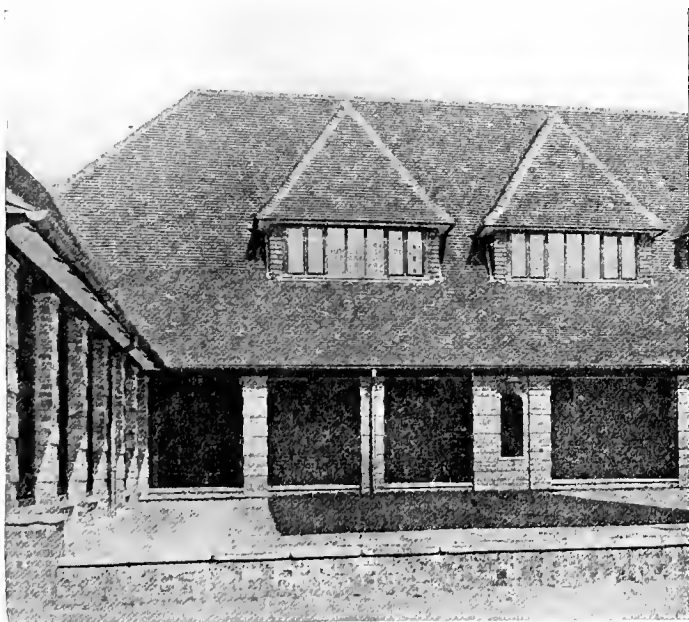
Some will demur to the idea of the Reconstruction Committee that village clubs should only be allowed to sell intoxicants until and so long as public houses are not brought under direct public control. Still more may doubt the wisdom of attaching an existing public house to the village hall. If the privately owned public house is to be dis-established, the house itself could be converted at small expense into a private dwelling house, and the sale of intoxicants transferred to the village club, which could be enlarged as necessary. There is, of course, great divergence of opinion on this matter, but there is much to be said for the view that a club should provide the greatest liberty for its members, in conformity always with order and good morals. The clubman in Pall Mall and Piccadilly has this liberty. Why not the members of the village club?

CHAPTER VII

*NETTLEBED WORKING MEN'S CLUB AND
INSTITUTE*

A complete and costly centre for village life—Designed by the late Charles Mallows—Finance of its working—Varied equipment—Membership—Cinema—Educational facilities.

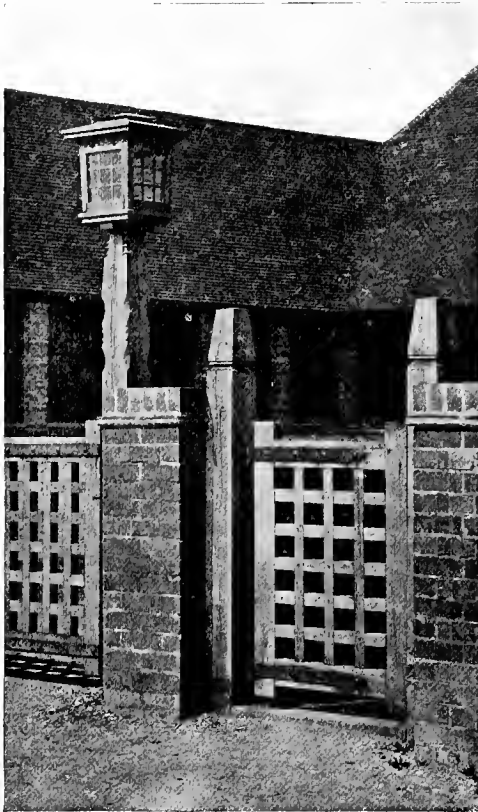
ALL golfers who motor from London to Huntercombe must have noticed in Nettlebed a very attractive building which is set back a little from the road and grouped round a forecourt. It houses the village club which Mr. Robert



73.—PART OF SOUTH FRONT FROM FORECOURT.

Fleming has provided. In the completeness of its accommodation and equipment it compares rather with the club at Kensing, Kent (Chapter VI), than with the more modest buildings illustrated in earlier chapters. The building cost, exclusive of lighting and heating, amounted before the War

to £4,420. This means that a similar building might easily cost £13,000 to-day, and could therefore only be possible in a village lucky enough to possess a wealthy and generous benefactor. The complete scheme which it represents must, therefore, be regarded rather as an ideal to be aimed at than as a practical proposition for most villages, where such an institute can be secured only by the small subscriptions of the many,



74.—ENTRANCE GATE AND LANTERN.

instead of, as in this case, by the generosity of one donor. The hall was let in 1915 (when I last saw it) on a yearly tenancy, at the nominal rent of £20 per annum, to a committee of twelve, under the chairmanship of the local builder, including the doctor and Mr. Fleming's agent,

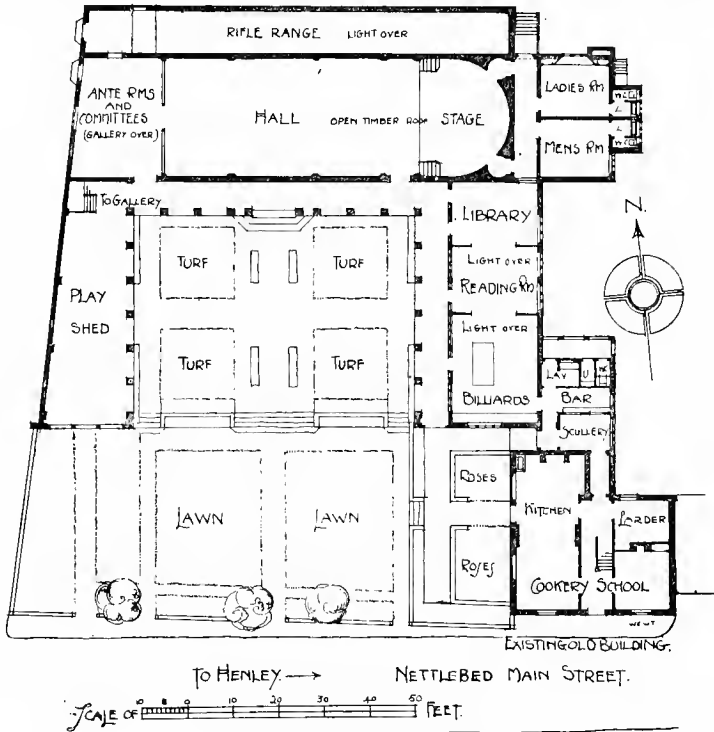


The late Charles Malloes.

75.—NETTLEBED VILLAGE CLUB: FROM THE ROAD.

the remainder being working men. The accounts of the first year's working make interesting reading, and some notes on them may be helpful to other people who are

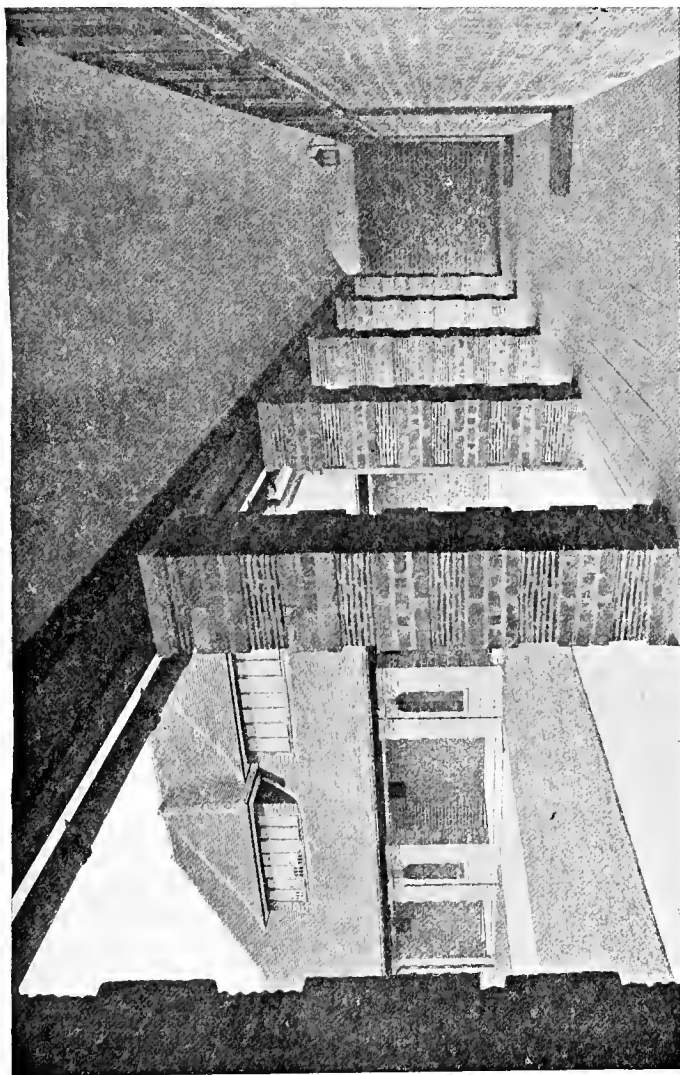
working village clubs. Subscriptions (at 4s. per annum) and entrance fees (6d.) amounted to £51. The general expenses account, including the nominal sum of £50 for light, rent, and heating, amounted to £114, but this did not include the caretaker's wages. Against this sum must be set profits from hiring of hall, etc., but there remained



The late Charles Mallows.

76.—PLAN OF NETTLEBED VILLAGE CLUB.

a debit balance of £66. The games account showed better, with a profit of £64, and the refreshment account was also encouraging, with a profit of £76. The total result of the first year's working showed a nominal profit of about £125, but as the caretaker's wages were met by a special gift, this was obviously only nominal, and it would not have

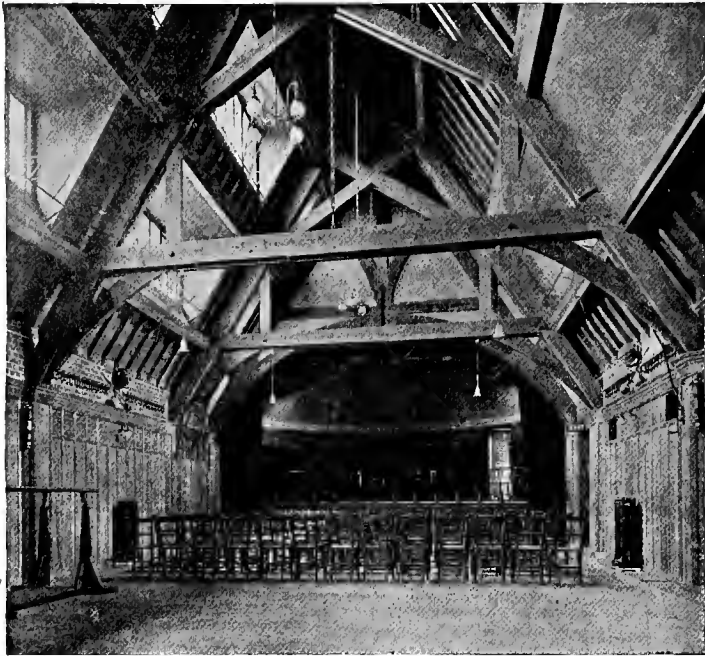


77.—UNDER THE EAST CLOISIER.

appeared as a profit if the club had been run during the period on purely independent lines.

By Mr. Robert Fleming's courtesy I am able to reprint

in Appendix E the full accounts of the year 1918, which I gladly do for various reasons. Marking as they do the abnormal conditions of the last year of the War, they are not typical of the future (especially in members' subscriptions, which amounted only to £14 9s., as compared with £51 in the club's first year), but they give an idea of the expenses of a fully organised club. Better still, they



78.—THE HALL AT NETTLEBED.

show how a club's accounts should be kept so as to reveal how each department makes a profit or a loss. At Nettlebed refreshments, games, and entertainments did well, especially the first, but even so it needed the generous help with a timely £50 from Mr. Fleming to enable the Profit and Loss Account to balance with £17 13s. on the right side. With the membership on its way to the pre-War figure, and with

a consequent increase in the refreshment, games, and entertainment turnover, the next account will doubtless balance without artificial aid.

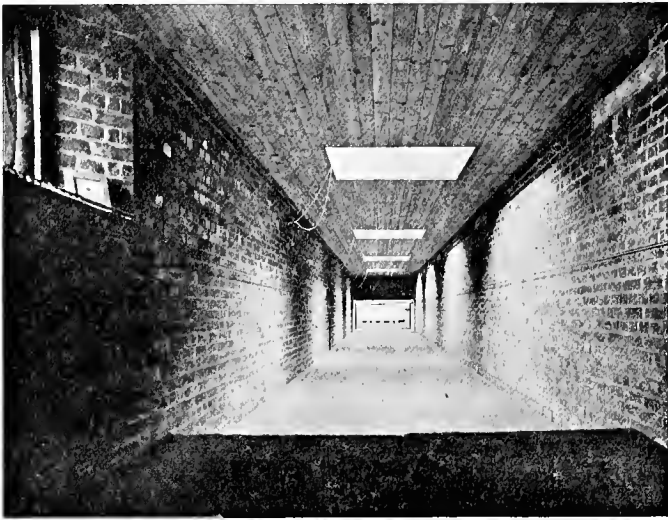
I come now to the uses to which the building is put. The local Foresters' Court is held there monthly, as well as all meetings in connection with the cricket, football, and tennis clubs. The Foresters assemble there for their Annual Meeting of District Delegates, when as many as fifty are



79.—THE SKITTLE ALLEY.

served in the hall with lunch and tea. The Nettlebed and District Horticultural meetings and Annual Show have been held in the hall for the last four years. The Nettlebed school children drill there in wet weather, and the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides receive instruction in gymnastics and shooting. These advantages are at the continual disposal of the members of the club, who can also use the library every Saturday. A reference to the plan (fig. 76) will show how well the late

Charles Mallows provided for all these activities. The hall is a large and well-lighted room, with open timber roof and an apsidal stage at its east end (fig. 78). Behind the latter are two dressing rooms for theatricals, etc., and there is a committee room, also used as library, at the west end, under the gallery. The reading room and billiard room are in the east wing, and the west wing is devoted to a play shed, with skittle alley, etc. (fig. 79). All these main features of the building are connected by the very attractive cloister



80.—NETTLEBED: THE RIFLE RANGE

which appears in fig. 77. The bar is adjoining the cookery centre, etc., at the south-east corner. At the back of the hall, on the north side, is an admirable miniature rifle range (fig. 80). An ingenious arrangement of pulleys and cords is provided to bring the target back to its place. It is operated from the shooter's end of the range, and this ensures complete safety. Needless to say, the range has been largely used during the last few years.

No more evidence is needed of the appreciation of the

club in the village than the fact that in 1915 there were 673 inhabitants and 205 members, membership being limited to men. The War naturally affected membership very seriously, but in the winter of 1919 it had recovered to 153, and a considerable increase is expected immediately. The caretaker acted as the gymnasium instructor. The village pump is one of the most useful features. It is outside the front of the hall, accessible to the villagers. Large tanks



81.—FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

have been made to catch rain water. A tennis court and bowling green are provided at the back of the building. There are two small hop-sotch courts in the forecourt, and also a large one of "coronation" type in the middle. With regard to the architectural quality of the building, the photographs are sufficiently explanatory. The broad expanse of roof and big dormers (fig. 73), the solid brick piers of the cloister (fig. 77), and the attractive detail of the entrance gates (fig. 74) are all significant of artistic

skill, combined with a grasp of the practical problems involved.

Perhaps the most original feature of the equipment of the hall is the provision of a cinematograph apparatus. The provision of picture palaces in all English villages would be a doubtful advantage, if they showed the baser sort of "cowboy" and other sensational films. Given some restraint in the choice of subject, however, moving pictures make winter evenings more changeful. During 1918 the cinema was used very little, but it is now running every Saturday evening, and draws full houses. Mr. Fleming's main idea in installing a cinema at Nettlebed was to make use of its educational possibilities. The Oxfordshire Education Committee welcomed the provision, as also did the Inspector of Schools, the more so because it extended advantages to the school children of six parishes near Nettlebed. The Education Code permits teachers to take the whole or part of a school for rambles or visits to *places of educational interest* during school hours, and films have been shown at Nettlebed on certain afternoons to a concourse of children. The subjects of the pictures were chosen to illustrate geography, history, English, and Nature study. A village club can conduct its "cinema department" by joining a lending library of films, so that the subjects may be duly varied.

The lighter aspects of village life have not, however, been neglected at Nettlebed. Concerts, lectures, and dances are held in the main hall, which is laid with a special dancing floor of oak, famous throughout the district, and this is protected in the ordinary way by a cloth covering. Dancing classes are held weekly for children in the afternoon and for adults in the evening, and are conducted by a lady resident in the village. An instructress, under whose care the young girls of the village and district are taught cookery, laundry work, and housekeeping, lives in a house near the hall. Across the road is the school garden, divided into some fourteen plots, each cared for by one boy. At the

back of the playground is an old building converted into a carpenter's shop, in which another section of the boys work under the supervision of the village schoolmaster. All of these branches are under the control of the County Education Authority. Altogether, it will be seen that in these various ways instruction as well as amusement is provided.

In the varied organisation which it makes possible for the improvement of village life, Mr. Robert Fleming's work at Nettlebed is worthy not only of all praise, but of wide imitation. It can be said of it, as it should be said of all village clubs, that it is the true centre of village life in Nettlebed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ADAPTATION OF OLD BUILDINGS

Economic and æsthetic points—A new use for old barns—Examples at Westmill and Great Bookham.

BEFORE determining to build anew in order to house a village club, the promoters should consider whether there is not some ancient building in the village which has outgrown its original purpose, but offers the possibility of adaptation. An old and stoutly built barn lends itself readily for conversion into a hall, and it will often be cheaper to repair, alter, and add to it than to build *de novo*. But there is a deeper reason than mere economy. A building which has outlived its ancient purpose is not to be regarded as cumbering, but as hallowing the ground. Its long association with the life of the village has given it a vitality which should be respected. It is part of the place ; in some measure it will be haunted by the *genius loci*. Moreover, it is a chapter in the architectural story of the countryside which future generations must be allowed to read. The rough timber roofs of our late mediæval barns, of which a surprising number have survived, are as essential a feature of our building tradition as the vaulting of a great cathedral. Perhaps I may be forgiven the solecism of quoting from another book of my own : ¹

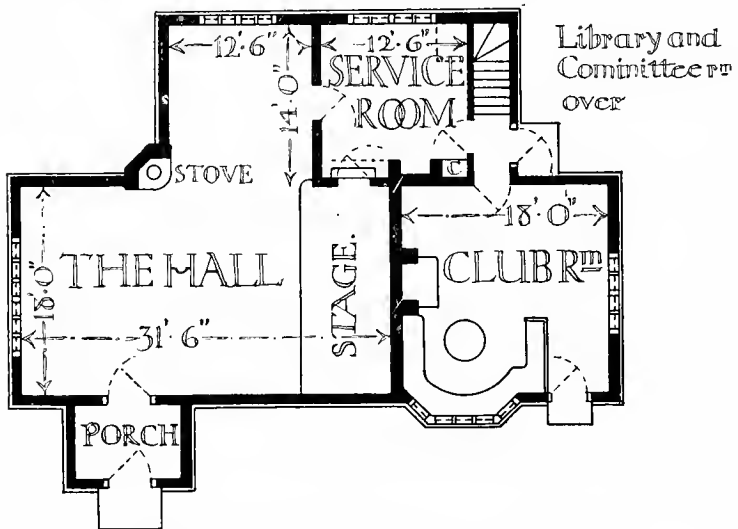
“ Every nerve should be strained to save the old work, for it is an expression of craftsmanship that can never be reproduced ; it is, in fact, a piece of history. Words to this effect have so often been written and spoken that there is a risk of their repe-

¹ From *The Country Life Book of Cottages*, Chapter XI, on “ Repair and Alteration.”

tition being wearisome. Nevertheless, all who love the English countryside and what it represents, all who see our market towns and villages continually marred by the ignorant builder with his hideous sham villas, purple slated, will appreciate that the writer on architecture must feel 'woe is me if I preach not the gospel.' Not only is the neglect of old village buildings bad art and the sign of an inert civic conscience, but it is bad business from the point of view of the landowner and everybody else. Let us take a case in point. There is a Worcestershire village (its name will occur to many) that has escaped the besom of destruction. It was always a beautiful place, and its beauty has been allowed to remain. A century ago, no doubt, there were a score or more villages in the same county quite as beautiful. It is possible to walk their broad streets and forget the hideous blots that now deface them, to imagine them as a whole as they now appear only in the fragments that remain. Who, though, wishes now to live in them, defaced as they are in their old features, and polluted by new vulgarities? What, on the other hand, of the undefaced village to which reference has been made? It has become a focus of new life, because its old beauties have remained. Folk are drawn to it, buy land, build new houses—but reverently and in the light of old traditions. It is alive with a new prosperity, and has taken on a new pride. Fortunately the place was obviously picturesque as a whole. It is necessary, however, if villages that have been defaced are to be recreated in a new spirit of beauty, that people should look into their buildings a little closely. In this connection we may listen to Mr. C. R. Ashbee, for his writings on the subject are helpful: 'People do not understand it for its construction or beauty. If it happen to be disguised, as old buildings often are, with bad or commonplace additions, they may ignore it altogether. The name of Sir Christopher Wren has saved many a building, and the fact that he could not be proven its author has lost us many more. We are a foolish and half-cultured people; and the principle of "beauty in all things," which we enjoy in the poetry of Keats, we deface, obliterate, and forget in the poetry of Thorpe, of John of Padua, of Gibbs, of Pugin, of the hundred and one little lyrics of stone that such as they have inspired by the wayside.' . . . If the principles upon which the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings works were widely known, many a cottage could be saved and made per-

fectly habitable for less money than would be spent in building anew. At the same time the village would retain its beauty and interest, which even now have a money value, and will be worth more as education in taste covers a wider field."

This point may be illustrated by reference to the accompanying illustrations of the village hall at Westmill, near Buntingford, Herts (figs. 82 and 83). It is a good example of the adaptation of an old barn, T-shaped on plan, timber-



82.—GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF HALL AT WESTMILL.

framed in the usual way of such structures in the eastern counties, and boarded outside. Mr. Charles Spooner, the architect for the work, prepared the plan now reproduced in fig. 82, but Mr. Greg, for whom it was done, decided to use the space proposed for a club room as a caretaker's cottage, and has since regretted the change. Another omission much felt is that of lavatory accommodation. Although the building has not answered all Mr. Greg's aspirations as a club and social centre, he has found it invaluable in other respects, *i.e.* for lectures, concerts, and

meetings generally. As a club it failed, because the village youths made the place intolerable to their elders. They played bagatelle and made such a noise that the quiet reading of papers by older and more studious folk became impossible, and after a while Mr. Greg gave it up, but he writes: "If the village really wanted it as a club, *and ran it themselves* with a responsible boss to keep order, there is no reason why it should not be successfully used in this way." This touches the spring of success; the



Charles Spooner.

83.—AN OLD BARN ALTERED AT WESTMILL.

people in a village must want a club enough to take the trouble to manage its affairs for the comfort of everyone, and not leave it to a generous donor to manage as well as give. It is this spirit that the Village Clubs Association seeks to stimulate in those who are setting about the formation of new clubs.

The building is attractive in its altered form. The boarding was in a bad state, and after repair was cement rough-cast outside and lath and plastered within, including a barrel ceiling. The tile roof needed only a little repair;



Richard Lee.

84.—THE VILLAGE HALL AT GREAT BOOKHAM.



85.—GREAT BOOKHAM: ONCE BARN, NOW VILLAGE HALL.

brick chimneys and fireplaces were built and the ground floor made good with concrete, tile paving, or wood block to suit the rooms. The delightful lantern, reminiscent of that at Horham Hall, not far away, houses an automatic air-pump ventilator for the extraction of foul air. The porch was an addition, and its sixteenth-century door frame was found in the barn. The cost of the alterations, in 1902, was £715.

In figs. 84 and 85 are illustrated another example of a converted barn at Great Bookham, Surrey, where the alterations were devised by Mr. Richard Lee. Until 1905 the barn was used for fattening cattle, and the following year it was opened as a village hall by the late Mr. Justice Bucknill.

HOW TO FORM A VILLAGE CLUB

(Being extracts from Pamphlet V.C.A.5, issued by the Village Clubs Association)

THE first step towards the formation of a Village Club is to call a village meeting in order that the advantages of a Club may be explained and the views of the residents ascertained. The Village Clubs Association would, where possible, and if so desired, send down a representative to speak at such a meeting.

The Association regard the following points as fundamental in drawing up the constitution of any Village Club, intended to meet the full requirements and conditions of rural life :

- (1) It should be the centre of all social activities, and of all forms of physical and mental recreation ;
- (2) It should be self-supporting and free from the element of patronage ;
- (3) All inhabitants of the village, without distinction of class or opinion, and, when practicable, of both sexes, should be eligible for membership ;
- (4) The entire control should be vested in a Committee elected either by (a) the members, or (b) the members and all the residents of the parish who would be eligible for membership residing within a radius of three miles.

Assuming that it is decided to form a Club the question of capital to start it at once arises ; it is therefore desirable to elect a small finance committee, secretary, and treasurer, with a view to collecting funds. In some cases Village Clubs are being partly erected with war memorial funds.

The next question that comes up is that of procuring suitable rooms or buildings, and much will necessarily depend upon the

amount of capital available. If this is small, it may be possible to secure the use of one or two rooms in an existing building, or an Army hut may be obtained from the Surplus Government Stores Committee, Artillery Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.1. The cost of building and of furniture at present is high, but where sufficient capital can be collected, it would probably be advisable to bear the additional expense with the object of getting the Club satisfactorily established as soon as possible.

Assuming that a suitable club room has been acquired, a second village meeting should be called for the purpose of electing (*a*) the necessary officers, (*a*) Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary; (*b*) a Committee of management, who should be responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the Club, which should be run on strictly democratic lines, and where there are women members the Association suggest that a proportion of the Committee should be women. The Club should be self-supporting, and the subscription fixed should be within the reach of all. It is a good plan to keep the subscription fee to the Club as low as possible, and this carries with it the right to use the Club house only. There should be a separate subscription for amusements, such as cricket club, football club, etc., and a small charge made for the use of billiard table; also the members who attend whist drives, dances, etc., should pay extra for these.

The Village Clubs Association and the National Federation of Women's Institutes both have for their main objects the development of social life in village communities and the co-operation of all inhabitants of the village for the promotion of social activities.

It is hoped therefore that Village Clubs will, wherever possible, co-operate with the Women's Institutes in a spirit of mutual helpfulness.

SCOPE OF CLUB

There is practically no limitation to the activities of a successful Village Club. The Club premises should, where possible, consist of more than one room: possibly a large room which can be used for games, etc., and a smaller room or rooms for reading, writing, etc. A billiard table is of course a great acquisition. A supply of magazines and papers should be made available for members, and where possible a lending library is of considerable advantage.

It is almost impossible to make the library a paying concern, but people in the neighbourhood are as a rule willing to help in providing books. The provision of children's books should not be overlooked, and this possibly will be found to be the part of the library that is most patronised.

Where it is at all practicable bath rooms are a valuable and useful addition to a Village Club.

The Club should be the centre of all activities, and sub-committees should be appointed to deal with such matters as the following :

- (1) Lectures, Classes, Library, etc.
- (2) Outdoor recreations, including :
 - (a) Football.
 - (b) Cricket.
 - (c) Tennis.
 - (d) Bowls.
- (3) Social recreations, *e.g.* :
 - (a) Concerts.
 - (b) Dances.
 - (c) Whist Drives.
 - (d) Billiard Tournaments.
- (4) Horticulture, Village Industries, etc.

The above do not necessarily include all matters which might be dealt with by a successful Club, but these must be left to the discretion of the Committee and to the particular circumstances of the village.

GENERAL REMARKS

It is necessary that rules should be drawn up for the use of the Club, and that these should be compiled by the Committee, and based on the model set of rules drawn up by the Village Clubs Association, with the alterations necessary to conform to local conditions.

It is considered very essential that a successful Club should be non-political and non-sectarian.

HOW AN URBAN OR RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL MAY ASSIST

An Urban or Rural District Council can, as part of a housing scheme and subject to the approval of the Ministry of Health, provide a Public Hall, and in such a case the financial assistance given by the Exchequer to Housing Schemes would be available.

HOW A PARISH COUNCIL MAY ASSIST

A reply given in the House of Commons by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board (Ministry of Health) indicated that that Department would consider sympathetically applications from Parish Councils to assist in the formation of Village Clubs.

Parish Councils may levy a rate not exceeding 3*d.* in the £, or, with the consent of a Parish Meeting, up to 6*d.* in the £, for the provision and maintenance of buildings required for public offices, meetings, etc. But subject to this limitation they might further the erection of Village Halls in the following ways :

- (a) If the hall were erected by voluntary subscriptions, they could accept it as a gift for the benefit of the inhabitants of the parish, and so become responsible for its future maintenance.
- (b) They could contribute towards the cost of erection, as a war memorial, with the sanction of the Ministry of Health.
- (c) They could contribute towards the cost of erection, as a building which would be partly used for public offices or for meetings, and could raise a loan for this purpose with the sanction of the County Council.
- (d) They could erect the building as a war memorial and for public offices or for meetings (with sanctions as above mentioned) and receive voluntary subscriptions as contributions towards expenses.
- (e) If the building were to be used partly as a public library they could take action by adopting the Public Libraries Act, 1892, which would enable them to raise a 1*d.* rate for that express purpose. The adoption must be by the Parish Meeting.
- (f) A Parish Council may let any building vested in them, but in the case of a building erected at the expense of the rates, may not do so for more than one year without the consent of the Ministry of Health.

DRAFT RULES FOR VILLAGE CLUBS

(Being extracts from Pamphlet V.C.A.2, issued by the Village Clubs Association, to be read in conjunction with Appendix A

THE following draft rules have been prepared by the Association for the assistance of persons forming a Village Club. They may be modified to suit the circumstances of each case, but they embody the general principles which are suggested as a suitable basis for the constitution of a Club.

As each Club should be self-governing, the Association makes no attempt to impose conditions, other than the adoption of these general principles, upon any Clubs desirous of becoming affiliated to it. In accordance with the general principle that membership of the Club should be open to all inhabitants, without distinction, the Association favours the inclusion of both sexes, and of boys and girls who have reached a wage-earning age, but as local conditions may make this inadvisable, it does not attempt to dictate to affiliated Clubs on these points.

RULES

1. The name of the Club shall be and its object shall be to provide a centre for all social activities and for all forms of physical and mental recreation.
2. Membership of the Club shall be open to all inhabitants (without distinction of sex¹) of (16) years of age and upwards, of the village (or villages) of
3. Every member shall pay an entrance fee of².. and an annual subscription of which may be payable quarterly.

¹ The words inserted in brackets may be omitted or altered in accordance with local conditions.

² It is suggested that the entrance fee should be not less than 1s., and the quarterly subscription not less than 3s.

4. The management of the Club shall be vested in a Committee consisting of members, exclusive of *ex officio* members.
5. The officers of the Club shall be a President, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary.
6. The property of the Club shall be vested in three Trustees.
7. The Committee and officers shall be elected annually by ballot, at a general meeting of all the members of the Club. The officers and trustees shall be *ex officio* members of the Committee.
8. Persons wishing to join the Club must be proposed by one member and seconded by another, and their names and addresses, with the names of the proposer and seconder, shall be posted in the Club for (7) days prior to election. The election of members shall be vested in the Committee.
9. The Committee shall have power to elect as members, persons residing outside the area specified in Rule 2, on such terms as they may deem suitable.
10. The Committee shall have power, if they think fit, to admit, at reduced terms of subscription, the members of any local organisation established for the promotion of social activity or recreation.
11. The Committee shall draw up by-laws for the general management of the Club, and the regulation of games and other forms of recreation.
12. The Committee shall have power to form such sub-Committees as they may deem expedient, and to appoint and fix the remuneration of any person employed in the service of the Club.
13. Any member may introduce as a visitor a friend, not being a resident in the area as defined in Rule 2, or being under (16) years of age, by inserting his (or her) name in a book kept for the purpose, on payment of (2d.) for each day on which such friend uses the Club.
14. No member shall be allowed to take part in any proceedings of the Club, or vote upon any subject connected with the Club, until he (or she) shall have paid his (or her) any due subscription and been a member for one month.
15. The Annual General Meeting shall be held at such time as the Committee may appoint. Special general meetings shall be summoned by the Committee on the requisition

- of members of the Club. Notice of General Meetings shall be posted in the Club for at least 14 days.
16. At General Meetings members shall form a quorum, and at Committee Meetings shall form a quorum.
 17. No sectarian or political subject shall be discussed at Committee Meetings or General Meetings of the Club.
 18. In case of misconduct of any member, either in or out of the Club, the Committee shall have the power to suspend such member, and the General Meeting shall have the power to expel him from the Club.
 19. The accounts of the Club shall be audited each year by two auditors elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting.
 20. The Club shall be affiliated to the Village Clubs Association.

*ADVANTAGES OF AFFILIATION TO THE VILLAGE
CLUBS ASSOCIATION*

(Reprinted from Pamphlet V.C.A.6 issued by the Association)

ONE of the chief objects of the Village Clubs Association is to offer to Clubs in rural districts, which are constituted in accordance with the general principles of the Association, the advantages of a central organisation for mutual help and co-operation.

The following are among the services and benefits which the Association is able at present to offer to affiliated Clubs, and it is hoped that other means of rendering assistance may be found practicable as the organisation develops :

1. Information and advice on the management of Village Clubs and the maintenance and extension of their activities.

2. The supply of speakers and lecturers at small cost, to address Village Club audiences on subjects of general interest, such as Natural History, Travel, Pictures, History, Literature, etc. Lectures will be illustrated by magic-lantern slides, or will be given in connection with a cinema. (Cinema Exhibitions can only be given in halls licensed for that purpose.)

3. The loan of sets of magic-lantern slides suitable for illustrating addresses and lectures on popular subjects.

4. The provision of facilities for the purchase through the Association, at special prices, of Club Furniture, Games, Stationery, Playing Cards, and other Club necessities, *e.g.* :

(a) Club Furniture of all descriptions at wholesale prices, made by one of the leading English firms. (Samples may be seen at the V.C.A. Headquarters, 14A, Iddesleigh House, Caxton Street, S.W.1.)

(b) A special Billiard Table (by a well-known maker) called "The Village Club Table," with all accessories for the game, at a considerably reduced price.

(c) Games and sporting equipment at 10 per cent. discount on catalogue prices, from a well-known sports manufacturer.

5. The provision, for use by members of affiliated Clubs, of an Enquiry Bureau at Headquarters.

6. The arrangement of sight-seeing parties for members of affiliated Clubs, and their personal conduct, if desired, to places of interest in London.

The annual subscription of a Village Club admitted into the Association is on the following scale :

	£	s.	d.
If the number of its members is not more than 100 .	0	5	0
If the number of its members is over 100 and less than 200	0	10	0
If the number of its members is over 200 and less than 300	0	15	0
If the number of its members is over 300	1	0	0

An affiliated Club is entitled to appoint one representative as a member of the Association for each 5s. subscribed.

MEMORANDUM ON EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

(Reprinted from Pamphlet V.C.A.4 issued by the Village Clubs Association)

THE Village Club, if it is to fulfil all that may be reasonably expected of it, should be a means of providing mental stimulus as well as social recreation, and become, in short, the centre of intellectual as well as of social life in the village. Without the stimulus which a virile intellectual life alone can supply, it is to be feared that the village community, in its endeavours to provide itself with some of the social amenities which are so sadly lacking in country districts at the present time, may be tempted to confine its activities to the more superficial requirements of the inhabitants.

In the recent history of the industrial workers of these islands nothing augurs so well for the future of the country as the remarkable enthusiasm for higher education of a university standard which has been evinced by members of this class. It would appear as if the strength of the appeal which the Humanities make to the ordinary artisan has been frequently overlooked when it has not been deliberately ignored. Instances are not wanting of men walking three to five miles on one night a week for a period of four or five years in order to attend a weekly class on some such subject as Economics, Politics, or History. Nor has interest been exclusively confined to these subjects; Philosophy, Literature, and Biology have proved equally magnetic.

The majority of these classes have been held in industrial centres in the North, the Midlands, and in North and South Wales for example, but it is felt that the strength of the appeal which the higher branches of learning must make to workers in rural districts cannot be less than it has been shown to be in the case of those who inhabit our urban areas.

Moreover, it is felt that if the life of the rural dweller is to be made equal to that of the townsman he must not be barred the opportunity of communing with all the best that has been thought and wrought in the world.

Fortunately considerable provision of one kind or another has been made with a view to spreading the benefits of higher education, and the aim of the present circular is to call the attention of Village Clubs to some of these, with a view to stimulating interest in rural districts in the possibility of continuous higher education being carried on as a part of the normal activities of a modern Village Club.

LECTURES AND CLASSES

Among the organisations whose object is the provision of opportunities for higher education none can rival the *University Extension Movement* in the length of its service and the universality of its appeal. Founded at Cambridge in 1873, it was taken up by Oxford in 1878, and has since come to be recognised almost as an integral part of the work of a University. Of the eleven Universities and four University Colleges in England and Wales, six have definitely constituted Extension Boards whose sole duty is to spread the benefits of higher education throughout their immediate areas, or, in the case of the two older Universities, throughout the country generally, and of the remainder it is true to say that they have all engaged in extension work at some time or another.

The choice of lectures and the control of finance is entirely in the hands of the Local Committees. The lecturer is appointed by the Central Authority. When a course has been selected, a syllabus of the lectures is sent down to the centre to guide the reading of the students, together with a library of books bearing on the subject. Every lecture is followed by a class at which questions are asked and papers set. The cost of each course varies with the number of lectures given, etc.

The Tutorial Class Movement represents a further development of the University Extension movement in the direction of more intensive study. The course, which is arranged by representatives of the workers in the locality and members of the University concerned, acting as a Joint Committee, extends over a period of three years. The number of students is limited to about

thirty per class, and the expenditure is borne to the extent of three-quarters of the cost by the Board of Education, the remaining quarter being borne by the University concerned and the members of the class, the Education Authority, the Trade Unions interested, or the Co-operative Society, etc. Every University throughout the country and most of the University Colleges participate in this work.

The *Workers' Educational Association* (W.E.A.) is an organisation which has for its object the stimulating of the demand for higher education among the working classes. Lectures, classes, social meetings, and summer schools are arranged with a view to arousing interest in educational matters, and in many cases the local committee assumes responsibility for the establishment of University Tutorial Classes. It has a central organisation, and a special committee is just now considering the question of development in rural districts.

As an illustration of the way in which co-ordinated effort on the part of these various organisations might lead to opportunities for adult education being spread in rural districts, attention may be called to the spontaneous effort recently made by workers in the Potteries to popularise higher education among the miners in the surrounding villages.

In 1911 members of the Longton Tutorial Class felt that some effort should be made to extend the benefits of the education they had received through the instrumentality of that class to the mining villages which surround the Potteries, but which are cut off from the educational opportunities and amenities of town life. Miners in the villages also felt that there was a side of education for which little or no provision was made and that fuller opportunities for cultural education were required. The result was a demand for classes from twelve centres. The movement is entirely voluntary, no teacher receiving a penny for his services beyond out-of-pocket expenses. In 1916-17 classes were held at 30 centres with an aggregate attendance of 100 students.

PROVISION OF BOOKS

The provision of literature, especially of the more valuable and expensive books, has always seemed to be an insuperable difficulty with country villages, but there is reason to hope that this no longer need be the case.

Reference has already been made to the circulating library in connection with the University Extension Movement, and the same remark applies to the Tutorial Classes, which obtain their books either from the University under whose ægis the class is held or from the Central Library at Tavistock Square, London. The provision of these is, of course, contingent upon the formation of such classes.

The *Carnegie Trust*, however, is about to make arrangements for bringing the benefits of a circulating library within the reach of the remotest rural hamlet. At present the Trust is operating through the Education Committees, who are responsible in the first instance to the Trustees. But there is reason to believe that in a good many instances the Education Committee would be willing to place the adult section of the Library in the custody of the Village Club.

Where the organisations already enumerated may not, for some reason or other, at present be available, attention may be called to the *National Home Reading Union*, the object of which is to guide readers to the choice and use of books and provide a means of continuous education. In return for a very small fee it offers :

- (1) Courses of reading with select list of books in poetry, drama, fiction, languages, history, and philosophy.
- (2) A magazine published monthly during the Session (October—May).
- (3) Companionship in systematic reading and study in circles.

Much might be done to break down the isolation of village life, and to redeem it from the reproach of stagnation and dullness, if a resolute attempt were made to give members of a Village Club the opportunity of coming into touch with some of the organisations mentioned above. The appended list of names and addresses will enable those who feel the need of taking some such steps to get into touch with the organisation they may be particularly interested in, with a view to obtaining further information and availing themselves of its services.

The University Extension Movement.

CAMBRIDGE : Rev. D. H. S. Cranage, Litt.D., Syndicate Buildings, Cambridge.

OXFORD : J. A. R. Marriott, Esq., M.A., M.P., University Extension Delegacy, Examination Schools, Oxford.

LONDON : The Secretary, University of London, South Kensington, S.W.

MANCHESTER : The Secretary, University Extension Committee, The University, Manchester.

LIVERPOOL : The Secretary, University Extension Board, Liberty Buildings, School Lane, Liverpool.

LEEDS : The Secretary, University Extension Committee, The University, Leeds.

In the cases of the Universities of Birmingham, Bristol, Durham, and Sheffield, inquiries should be directed to the Registrar of the University ; of the University of Wales, to the Registrar of the University Colleges at Aberystwyth, Bangor, and Cardiff ; and to the Registrar of the University Colleges at Exeter, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Reading, and Southampton.

The Tutorial Class Movement.—Application should be made either to the Registrar of the University, the University College, or to the Extension Delegacy, as given above, or to the *District Secretary* of the W.E.A., as given below.

Workers' Educational Association :

Central Association : Mr. J. M. Mactavish, 16, Harpur Street, W.C.1.

London : Mr. H. Goodman, 16, Harpur Street, W.C.1.

Eastern District : Mr. G. H. Pateman, 276, Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge.

Midland District : Mr. T. W. Price, The University, Edmund Street, Birmingham.

North-Eastern District : Mr. J. G. Trevena, 4, Royal Arcade, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

North-Western District : Mr. E. Bibby, 377, Oxford Road, Manchester.

South-Eastern District : Mr. H. Goodman, 16, Harpur Street, W.C.1.

Western and South-Western District : Mr. W. R. Straker, 27, Morgan Street, St. Paul's, Bristol.

Welsh District : Dr. S. H. Watkins, 34, Station Road, Penarth, Glam.

Yorkshire District : Mr. G. H. Thompson, 21, Brudenell Road, Hyde Park, Leeds.

National Home Reading Union :

Miss Jeanie T. Swanson, Secretary, 12, York Buildings,
Adelphi, W.C.2.

The address of the *Carnegie Trustees* is Dunfermline, Scotland, but inquiries in the first instance might be addressed to the Secretary of the Education Committee for the county.

The Village Clubs Association suggest direct application to the organisations above mentioned, but if any difficulty is experienced, the General Secretary, 14A, Iddesleigh House, Caxton Street, S.W.1, will be glad to assist as far as may be possible.

APPENDIX E

NETTLEBED WORKING MEN'S CLUB AND INSTITUTE

Statement of Accounts for the Year ending December 31st, 1918

CASH ACCOUNT

RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
January 1st, 1918.		December 31st, 1918.	
To Balance at Bank	5 11 7	By Expenses Account	138 15 5
December 31st.		" Games Account	1 7 9
To Expenses Account	13 4 0	" Refreshment Account	221 10 5
" Games Account	13 19 4	" Entertainment Account	18 1 5
" Refreshment Account	288 7 9	" Balance at Bank	35 6 9
" Entertainment Account	25 11 11		
	<u>341 3 0</u>		
Subscriptions.	14 9 0		
Entrance Fees	0 14 0		
Visitors' Fees.	0 11 8		
Donation	50 0 0		
	<u>65 14 8</u>		
Interest on War Loan	2 12 6		
	<u>£415 1 9</u>		<u>£415 1 9</u>

EXPENSES ACCOUNT

PAYMENTS		RECEIPTS	
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	January 1st, 1918.	£ s. d.
January 1st, 1918.	0 4 0	By Provision for Excise Duty	3 16 6
To Stock (Card Cases, etc.)		December 31st.	
December 31st.		By Hire of Hall	13 4 0
To Rent	20 0 0	Stock (Card Cases, etc.)	0 4 0
" Rates, Insurance, and Excise Duty	11 8 8	" Balance to Profit and Loss Account	125 17 5
" Salary, Secretary	9 15 0		
" Wages, Steward	62 2 0		
" Extra Labour	12 2 6		
" National Health Insurance	0 8 6		
" Coal, Gas, and Electric Light	7 17 6		
" Newspapers	5 14 1		
" Stationery, Printing, Postages, and Cheque Books	3 19 8		
" Cleaning Materials	1 0 4		
" Tuning Piano	0 13 6		
" Carriage	0 2 8		
" Subscriptions	2 10 0		
" Audit Fee	1 1 0		
	138 15 5		
Creditors—			
Excise Duty	4 2 6		
	£143 1 11		£143 1 11

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GAMES ACCOUNT

PAYMENTS		RECEIPTS	
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	December 31st, 1918.	£ s. d.
January 1st, 1918.	4 12 6	By Billiards	13 11 6
To Stock (Cartridges, Targets, and Spoons)		Cards	0 7 10
December 31st.			
To Purchases—		Stock—Cartridges	3 17 6
Playing Cards	1 4 0	" Spoons	0 15 0
Billiard Tips	0 3 9		
	1 7 9		
" Balance to Profit and Loss Account	12 11 7		
	£18 11 10		£18 11 10

(Continued on next page)

NETTLED ACCOUNTS (Continued)

REFRESHMENT ACCOUNT

PAYMENTS		RECEIPTS	
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	December 31st, 1918	£ s. d.
January 1st, 1918.		By Bar Takings	288 7 9
To Stock	14 14 2	" Stock at Cost	2 18 0
December 31st.			
To Purchases—			
Beers	95 10 8		
Wines and Spirits	64 3 11		
Minerals	5 0 6		
Bottled Beer and Stout	4 7 6		
Stout	2 5 3		
Milk	1 15 1		
Peppermint and Ginger Wine	0 16 0		
Tobacco, Cigarettes, etc.	47 11 6		
	<u>221 10 5</u>		
.. Balance to Profit and Loss Account	55 1 2		
	<u>£291 5 9</u>		

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ENTERTAINMENT ACCOUNT

PAYMENTS		RECEIPTS	
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	December 31st, 1918,	£ s. d.
December 31st, 1918.		By Cinema Takings	25 11 11
To Hire of Films	7 18 8		
" War Tax Stamps	5 16 8		
" Extra Labour	3 2 6		
" Carriage	0 18 7		
" Cinema Licence	0 5 0		
	<u>18 1 5</u>		
.. Balance to Profit and Loss Account	7 10 6		
	<u>£25 11 11</u>		

£25 11 11

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

DR.	£ s. d.	CR.
December 31st, 1918.		£ s. d.
To Expenses Account	125 17 5	
By Balance, Profit for the year ending 31st December, 1918, carried to Balance Sheet	17 13 0	
	£143 10 5	
December 31st, 1918.		£ s. d.
By Donation	50 0 0	
" Subscriptions	14 9 0	
" Entrance Fees	0 14 0	
" Visitors' Fees	0 11 8	
	65 14 8	
" Refreshment Account	55 1 2	
" Games Account	12 11 7	
" Entertainment Account	7 10 6	
" Interest on War Loan	
	75 3 3	
	2 12 6	
	£143 10 5	

BALANCE SHEET

LIABILITIES	£ s. d.	ASSETS	£ s. d.
To Creditors—Excise Duty	By Stocks—Expenses Account	0 4 0
" Profit and Loss Account, Balance as per last Account, 31st December, 1917	70 19 1	Refreshment Account	2 18 0
Add Profit for the year ending 31st December, 1918, as per Account	17 13 0	Games Account	4 12 6
	88 12 1		7 14 6
	£92 14 7	" 4½ per cent. War Loan at Cost	49 13 4
		" Cash at Bank	35 6 9
			£92 14 7

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